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Managing Commercial Sex in West Germany, 1950s-1980s

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Abstract

This thesis examines the management of commercial sex in West Germany between the 1950s and the 1980s through the comparison of Cologne, Hamburg and West Berlin. Various interlocking understandings of commercial sex prevailed—as a health issue, a public order issue, as crime, or as work—and these understandings structure the thesis thematically. It explores both varying policies for managing commercial sex but also their impact in practice—how measures were *developed* and *negotiated* at the individual level—and draws out a wide range of actors, including police officers, city administrators, welfare workers, women who sold sex, their clients, and city residents. It argues that local-level variations and contradictions make it essential to broaden the gaze to examine laws and regulations in their implementation. It places developments in the context of post-war labour regimes, city-planning concerns, and increased globalisation. The thesis illustrates that the negotiation of older, repressive measures to manage commercial sex stretched past the initial post-war years to play out over the 1960s and 1970s, despite state-regulated prostitution being outlawed. It also questions overarching narratives of legal and sexual liberalisations in West German society. The thesis exposes the importance of source and perspective choices and highlights the impact of differing archival remnants on the stories we can tell.

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Contents

Glossary **8**

Abbreviations **9**

Introduction **10**

Literature review 15

Methodology 28

Commercial sex in the archives 34

1. Prologue: Before 1960 **40**

Regulation in the German empire 42

Selling sex in the Weimar Republic 44

Nazi Germany 45

Post-war prostitution 47

The early Federal Republic 49

Health offices in the 1950s 51

Police departments in the 1950s 52

Tensions with federal law: the early *Sperrbezirke* 54

Commercial sex at the turn of the decade 56

2. Health **58**

Health office surveillance in the three cities 60

Attendance and examinations 62

Patrols 64

Treatment 71

Reactions to and negotiations of health office surveillance 73

Resistance, avoidance, compliance 75

Clinic staff 83

Longer historical continuities 84

Relations between staff and registered women 87

Staff-patient confidentiality 88

Categories of ‘hwG’-persons 90
Trans* and gender non-conforming patients 90
Minors 91
Drug-users 93
Non-white and non-German women 95
Men 96
Conclusions 97

3. Work 101

Working women 103
Selling sex 106
Street-based commercial sex 108
Bar-based commercial sex 113
Selling sex in the ‘prostitute residences’ 115
Selling sex in the Eros-Centers 121
Indoor prostitution: Massage parlours, saunas, and salons 124
Indoor prostitution: Call-girl work 129
Sexual labour as ‘work-shy’ behaviour 132
The workhouse 134
Taxing sex 139
Conclusions 141

4. Crime 144

The vice police 145
To police and protect? Police officers and women who sold sex 147
Victims or perpetrators? 149
Profiting off the prostitution of others 154
Investigating *Kuppelei* 157
Reforming *Kuppelei* 161
The pimp 163
The criminal underground 166
Foreign pimps 168
Pimp relationships 170
Changing ideas of the pimp: the female pimp 174
Changing ideas of the pimp: the manager 176

Policing the drug trade 177

Policing migration 178

'Trafficking' 182

Conclusions 185

5. Public Order 187

Cologne's 'Regulation on the Protection of Youth and Public Decency' 189

Hamburg's 'Regulation on the Prohibition of Prostitution' 191

Sperrbezirke in their implementation 192

Complaining neighbours 197

Hamburg's entertainment district 200

Bringing St. Pauli into the *Sperrbezirk* 203

West Berlin as outlier 206

Public order and 'prostitute residences' 208

'A whorehouse fit for the famous German economic miracle' 211

An Eros-Center in Cologne 214

Closing Kleine Brinkgasse and Im Stavenhof 216

'The largest—nicest—and best organised Eros-Center in Europe' 219

No Eros-Center in West Berlin? 221

'A bad address also has its charms' 222

Conclusions 224

6. Epilogue: After 1980 228

Drugs and the 'heroin wave' 229

HIV/AIDS 232

Migration and 'trafficking' 236

Changing cities 238

The Whores' Movement 241

The 1988 Whores' Ball 246

Conclusions 248

Conclusion **251**

Appendices **259**

T.1. Registered prostitutes at Hamburg's ZB

A.1. Photographs of Hamburg *Koberfenster*

A.2. Berlin police cartoon

A.3. Photograph of St. Pauli pimps

A.4. Map of 1961 Hamburg *Sperrbezirk*

A.5. Cologne Sperrbezirk information sheet

A.6. Map of 1970 Hamburg *Sperrbezirk*

A.7. Kleine Brinkgasse photographs

Bibliography **272**

Glossary

Amt für öffentliche Ordnung	Public order office
Beratungsstelle	Counselling centre
Bockschein	Appointment card
Dirnenwohnheim(-e)	Prostitute residences
Falle schieben	Pretend sex
Fürsorgerin	Female welfare worker
Gesundheitsamt	Health office
Kasernierung	The practice of confining registered prostitutes in certain streets
Kriminalpolizei (Kripo)	Criminal investigative police
Kuppelei	Procuring (crime)
Ordnungsamt	Regulatory agency
Pflegeamt	Care office
Schutzpolizei (Schupo)	Protective police
Sichtungsstelle	Evaluation centre for ‘hwG’-persons (Cologne)
Sittenpolizei (die Sitte)	Vice police
sittenwidrig	immoral
Sperrbezirk(-e) (also: ***Sperrgebiet(-e)***)	Restricted area(s) for transactional sex
Unzucht	Unspecified sexual immorality/debauchery
Zuhälterei	Pimping (crime)

Abbreviations

CDU	*Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands* Christian Democratic Union of Germany
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany, West Germany
GBG	*Gesetz zur Bekämpfung der Geschlechtskrankheiten* Law on Combatting Venereal Diseases (unless otherwise stated, refers to 1953 law)
GDR	German Democratic Republic, East Germany
HwG	*Häufig wechselnder Geschlechtsverkehr* Habitually promiscuous
SPD	*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* Social Democratic Party of Germany
StGB	Criminal code
VD	Venereal disease
WKP	*Weibliche Kriminalpolizei und Jugendschutz* Police department made up of female police officers
ZB	*Zentrale Beratungsstelle für Prostituierte* Central Counselling Centre for Prostitutes (Hamburg)
ZZ	*Zentrale Zuführungsstelle* Central clinic (Berlin-Wedding)

Introduction

In 1981 a call for information was published across West Germany asking men who had paid for sex to write in detailing their experiences. [1] It promised to guarantee their anonymity, and asked in exchange they keep their reports 'short, clear, true'.[2] The plea went out, not from the police or health offices, but rather in the opening pages of a guidebook for clients, *Der Strich.*[3] By 1981, ten years since its initial publication, the guide had reached its eleventh edition and had grown from a 'somewhat thicker pamphlet' detailing prostitution in around 30 locations to a tome featuring over 200 towns and cities. On the cover it advertised its contents: the addresses, prices and ratings of the 'ladies of purchasable love', ostensibly gathered by six hard-working employees. Inside it acknowledged the limits of the information they were able to collect:

> Today almost every village offers paid sex. One would assume that this surplus would bring down prices, but that is not the case. The more of these so-called 'clubs' exist, the costlier the trade in desire. They seem to 'work' according to the motto: 'If a guest comes, then we want all his money too.' […] That is why we rely more and more on your assistance.[4]

Der Strich sold to its readers an image of an expanding, multi-faceted West German sex industry. Cologne, Hamburg and Berlin received multiple pages of treatment detailing the prevalence of street prostitution, brothels, saunas and massage parlours. On Hamburg the guide's descriptions were most effusive: 'in hardly any other city is the commodity of love traded so openly as in Hamburg. In St. Pauli almost every hotel is a brothel, streetwalkers stand on every metre of the street, from the young to the veterans, and diverse pleasure houses do the rest'.[5] Visitors to West Berlin would not be disappointed either, the guide claimed, for 'the oldest profession in the world is so numerously represented in Berlin and in all its variations', whilst Cologne was home to a 'Super-Pleasure-House', 'the largest and most modern […] of the FRG'.[6]

Despite all the offerings depicted at length in the pages of *Der Strich*, there remained numerous and longstanding uncertainties about the status of commercial sex in the Federal Republic. When the *Palais d'Amour* opened in 1968—seemingly as

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[1] I use West Germany and FRG interchangeably to refer to the Federal Republic of Germany, founded in 1949. East Germany or GDR refers to the German Democratic Republic.
[2] *Der Strich* (Berlin, 1980/1981), 6. All translations are my own, unless otherwise stated.
[3] The term 'der Strich' is a colloquial term, used to refer primarily to street prostitution.
[4] *Der Strich*, 5–6.
[5] Ibid., 205.
[6] Ibid., 35, 292.

Hamburg's second high-rise brothel—one newspaper asked: 'are they actually allowed to do that?'.[7] A 1969 guide to prostitution saw paradoxes as a central part of the way commercial sex was handled in West Germany and informed its readers: 'there are new-build house blocks which are known globally, established with official permission, and which only serve the purpose of purchasable love—there are whole streets and houses inconspicuously monitored by the authorities—but there is no prostitution'.[8] Whilst the author may have carried his representation to the extreme, downplaying, perhaps, that transactional sex itself was not illegal, his emphasis on the paradox and contradictory nature of West German law and practice on prostitution was not misplaced. Brothels, or brothel-like establishments, remained outlawed in the Federal Republic, whilst jurists and city administrators instead claimed suspect establishments were simply 'prostitute residences' (*Dirnenwohnheime*). These residences were in turn often supported and surveilled by city police forces despite state-regulated prostitution (known as *Reglementierung* or regulationism) having been abolished with the Law on Combatting Venereal Diseases (GBG) of 1927.[9]

Many of these paradoxes—of brothels that were not brothels, of police regulation that was not regulationism—took place at city level. This thesis examines the emergence of West Germany's unique system of managing commercial sex in the second half of the twentieth century by teasing out the regulations, inconsistencies and negotiations in the cities of Cologne, Hamburg and West Berlin from the 1950s to the 1980s.[10] It explores how local measures combined with or worked contrary to federal law in determining the lives of women who sold sex in this period, upholding regulationist tendencies and strengthening public order policing, despite prostitution's legality throughout the period. It argues that developments were not simply imposed from above but constituted by multiple smaller negotiations carried out at a range of disparate sites. These sites included, but were not limited to, the courtrooms, streets, venereal disease clinics and the local press. Amongst those 'managing' commercial sex

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[7] 'Neues Heim für "Schnelle Bräute"', *Welt am Sonntag*, 21.07.1968.

[8] Rolf Alexander, *Die Prostitution in Deutschland* (Munich, 1969), 7.

[9] Regulation was enforced by the local 'vice police' and subjected registered women to compulsory medical examinations and a range of further restrictions on their personal rights. Typically, it banned registered women from major public areas and required them to reside in police-approved lodgings. Brothels were selectively re-introduced in Nazi Germany, but regulation was outlawed in the post-war years. The 1927 GBG was replaced in 1953 by a new Law on Combatting Venereal Diseases.

[10] I use the term West Berlin to describe the area of 'Groß-Berlin' administered by the three western allies from the end of the Second World War in 1945 to German reunification in 1990.

were members of the local authorities, welfare workers, and police officers, but also businesspeople, local residents and the women who sold sex themselves. Local regulations and their implementation functioned according to different understandings of commercial sex as a health issue, a labour issue, a crime issue, or a public order issue. These four themes, although not comprehensive, proved decisive to the way commercial sex was managed in the FRG.

Selling sex, although circumscribed by criminal law and local regulations, remained legal throughout the period. Men who had sex with men, however, were criminalised under §175 until 1969, and men who sold sex were treated largely separately to their female colleagues. The blurred lines between queer sex and prostitution in the sources, in law and in court cases, in police reports and criminological texts, significantly complicate the study of male prostitution.[11] Due to the different legal contexts, this work concentrates on women who sold sex.[12]

This thesis represents the first substantive historical study of commercial sex in post-war West Germany, building upon studies of prostitution both within and outside the German context. It is the first to closely examine the development of Germany's complex legal system—often cited as a unique example of 'legalised prostitution'—that is at the forefront of debates about prostitution control in the present day. By recreating the range of ways selling sex was restricted, regulated and criminalised, it also significantly extends the wider discussion of state-regulated prostitution into the later twentieth century. The local-level approach, rather than a top-down account of parliamentary debates and legislation, or an overreliance on the press, brings precision, as well as discussions of agency, resistance and negotiation, to the study of commercial sex in West Germany.

Who were women who sold sex in this period?

Central to the thesis is the exploration of how women who sold sex experienced and negotiated the measures implemented against them. It recognises that they did so under

[11] Houlbrook expertly examines these blurry lines in London: Matt Houlbrook, *Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918-1957* (Chicago, 2006).

[12] Lücke, Beachy and Evans offer introductions into this topic in the German context: Robert Beachy, *Gay Berlin: Birthplace of a Modern Identity* (New York, 2014); Martin Lücke, *Männlichkeit in Unordnung: Homosexualität und männliche Prostitution in Kaiserreich und Weimarer Republik* (Frankfurt/Main, 2008); Martin Lücke, 'Hierarchien der Unzucht: Regime männlicher und weiblicher Prostitution in Kaiserreich und Weimarer Republik', *L'Homme*, 21/1 (2010), 49–64; Jennifer Evans, 'Bahnhof Boys: Policing Male Prostitution in Post-Nazi Berlin', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 12/4 (2003), 605–36.

a diverse range of circumstances. Their experiences of commercial sex, their workplaces, ages and social backgrounds differed. Whilst for some, selling sex was marked by frequent interactions with the local authorities, others engaged in sexual labour for short periods or in private apartments away from institutional interference (and thus, unfortunately, also largely away from the historical record).

Throughout the period in question, sociologists, administrators, journalists, politicians and police officers made numerous attempts to determine just why exactly women turned to selling sex, and to identify conclusively any links to their social backgrounds.[13] Responding to a 1957 UN questionnaire on prostitution and trafficking, the federal government stated that prostitute women came 'predominantly from humble backgrounds' yet conceded that occasionally 'women from higher social classes also appear as prostitutes'.[14] The high-profile murder that same year of luxury call-girl Rosemarie Nitribitt, who had herself been raised partly in state-run reformatories, illustrates a typical oversight of such studies. Understandings of class based on fathers' occupations neglected to consider how class and wealth were shaped by and intersected with women's experiences of selling sex.[15]

I do not intend to follow in the footsteps of contemporaries and attempt a comprehensive study of 'the prostitute' in this period. Generalisations or categorisations do not capture the multitude of circumstances that led women to sell sex, or to continue doing so over a period of many years. Even if this were the case, with so many selling sex outside the realm of institutional interference, any studies of typicality would always be marred by their absence. Contemporary sociological studies investigating the demographic background of women who sold sex also, importantly, came to contradicting conclusions; whilst some linked prostitution directly to the working class, others emphasised that women who sold sex came from all social backgrounds.[16] When debating new measures, local actors often disagreed why women turned to selling sex; in 1967, for instance, representatives from Hamburg's health office blamed women's upbringing and background.[17] The city's youth authority, by contrast, found the fault

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[13] Keding, 'Auskunftersuchen Bayerischer Rundfunk', 01.08.1968, 352-6-4689, StHH; Jürgen Kahmann and Hubert Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution in Hamburg* (Heidelberg, 1981), 90.

[14] *Antwort der Bundesregierung*, B-106-17303, BArch.

[15] William Simmat, *Prostitution und Öffentlichkeit: soziologische Betrachtungen zur Affäre Nitribitt* (1959).

[16] Kahmann/Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution*, 59–60.

[17] *Niederschrift 5. Sitzung Sonderausschuss*, 18.12.1967, 351-10-II-2664, StHH.

primarily in their surroundings.[18] Attempts to answer why often slid into the implicit or explicit pathologising of women who sold sex as deviant or simply lazy.

So what can we know? In the late 1950s and into the 1960s, the overwhelming majority of women who sold sex in 'prostitute residences' were German nationals. The above-mentioned UN questionnaire, for instance, recorded 396 of 398 total registered women in Hamburg as German. Of the 1,258 women working from registered houses in North-Rhine Westphalia, 1,241 were German. Although no data was available on Berlin's 18 registered houses, the states of Hesse and Bremen recorded the nationalities as 'German' and 'predominantly German' respectively. With these statistics, respondents deemed the number of foreign prostitutes 'insignificant'.[19] Police files from Hamburg and Cologne suggest that this demographic continued into the 1960s, despite the harbour city's supposed internationalism.[20] Here, the most striking demographic change amongst women engaged in sexual labour emerges—by the 1970s, women selling sex from Cologne's *Eros-Center* were just as likely to not have German citizenship as to be nationals.[21]

These figures cited above are restricted to women who worked in the so-called 'prostitute residences'. These were always only a minority of women engaged in selling sex.[22] Although they can indicate the effects of new migration patterns and changes to immigration law on commercial sex in West Germany, they remain only a snapshot. Rather than aiming to create one narrative, I emphasise the diversity of circumstances, working conditions and social backgrounds represented amongst the stories covered in this research. Both teens soliciting in bars and women in their 70s selling sex in Cologne's registered houses were targeted by city policies to manage commercial sex. The effects varied over time and space, institutional intervention different for women caught selling sex in the ruins of bombed out cities in post-war Germany, to those working in peep shows in 1980s Berlin or Hamburg. Yet some form of interference remained likely, as women continued to be subjected to forcible gynaecological examinations, sent to reformatories, fined or imprisoned for their engagement with sexual labour. As the following makes abundantly clear, there was no one 'prostitute

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[18] Ibid.
[19] *Antwort der Bundesregierung*, B-106-17303, BArch.
[20] See: List of Nächelsgasse tenants, Acc-361-A189, HAStK; Julia Sneeringer, *A Social History of Early Rock'n'Roll in Germany. Hamburg from Burlesque to The Beatles 1956–69* (London, 2018), 43.
[21] 'Eros-Center Köln', 15.10.1975, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.
[22] Kahmann/Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution*, 123.

voice' or 'experience', with women negotiating changing policies in different, and sometimes contradictory, ways.

Literature review

The historical study of prostitution continues to be a lively field, in which international scholars engage with larger historiographical or methodological debates—on terminology, agency, resistance, and with the fields of labour history, international history and the history of sexuality, to name but a few. In 1999, Timothy Gilfoyle could already write of an 'abundance of articles' on the study of prostitution, an abundance that has continued to grow considerably, including several significant monographs.[23] These works have addressed commercial sex in the context of studies of migration, public space, criminality, and labour, and have resoundingly shown that the study of prostitution is by no means marginal. Rather, they have offered insights into the politics and experience of gender and sexuality, the intersections of race and class, as well as processes of state and nation-building in numerous circumstances. My research is therefore part of a wider conversation, which stretches beyond the immediate context of West Germany itself.

Earlier historical studies of prostitution were typically concerned with state-regulated prostitution implemented in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[24] Historians have since viewed regulation in a range of environments, including its specificities in the colonial context, or the perceived threats of venereal disease when intertwined with questions of gender and race.[25] Although often seen as an

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[23] Timothy Gilfoyle, 'Prostitutes in History: From Parables of Pornography to Metaphors of Modernity', *The American Historical Review*, 104/1 (1999), 119.

From recent years: Siobhán Hearne, *Policing Prostitution: Regulating the Lower Classes in Late Imperial Russia* (Oxford, 2021); Julia Laite, *The Disappearance of Lydia Harvey: A True Story of Sex, Crime and the Meaning of Justice* (London, 2021); Nancy Wingfield, *The World of Prostitution in Late Imperial Austria* (Oxford, 2017); Saheed Aderinto, *When Sex Threatened the State: Illicit Sexuality, Nationalism, and Politics in Colonial Nigeria, 1900-1958* (Urbana, 2015); Jessica Pliley, *Policing Sexuality: The Mann Act and the Making of the FBI* (London, 2014).

[24] Alain Corbin, *Women for Hire: Prostitution and Sexuality in France after 1850*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (Cambridge, 1990); Mary Gibson, *Prostitution and the State in Italy, 1860-1915* (New Brunswick/London, 1986); Judith Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class, and the State* (Cambridge, 1980).

[25] Philippa Levine, *Prostitution, Race, and Politics: Policing Venereal Disease in the British Empire* (New York/London, 2003); Philip Howell, *Geographies of Regulation: Policing Prostitution in Nineteenth-Century Britain and the Empire* (Cambridge, 2009); Stephen Legg, *Prostitution and the Ends of Empire: Scale, Governmentalities, and Interwar India* (Durham/London, 2014); Isabelle Tracol-Huynh, 'The Shadow Theater of Prostitution in French Colonial Tonkin: Faceless Prostitutes under the Colonial Gaze', *Journal of*

alternative system to the criminalisation of prostitution, Luise White and others have asserted that regulation also always criminalises the unregistered. As such, they argue, regulation is inherently responsible for the creation of hierarchies between prostitutes.[26] A new wave of prostitution historians is now paying attention to the impact of business interests, real estate and landlords, and the wide range of actors—including male clients or brothel madams—involved in shaping and upholding measures implemented against women who sold sex.[27]

Both within and outside of regulation, historians have explored the symbolic role attributed to prostitution and its position in debates about social control, women's rights and humanitarianism. This has included exploring how middle class women used narratives of anti-'trafficking' or 'white slavery' and the accompanying conceptualisation of prostitutes as victims in the establishment of rescue and reform movements.[28] Scholars have resolutely shown how moral panics around prostitution repeatedly also illuminated wider societal anxieties, whether they be regarding class, urban life, gender, or race.[29]

Historians have also convincingly placed commercial sex within the wider context of women's formal and informal labour.[30] LaShawn Harris, for example, researches Black women's sexual labour as part of a wider study on Black women's participation in New York's informal economy.[31] This approach helps avoid an undue stress on motive, which, as Philippa Levine argues, functions as a pathologising device to demarcate women who sold sex, when, for other labour 'we accept a measure of

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Vietnamese Studies, 7/1 (2012), 10–51; Ashwini Tambe, *Codes of Misconduct: Regulating Prostitution in Late Colonial Bombay* (Minneapolis/London, 2009).

[26] Luise White, *The Comforts of Home. Prostitution in Colonial Nairobi* (Chicago/London, 1990), 5; Tambe, *Codes of Misconduct*, xiii.

[27] Hearne, *Policing Prostitution*; Keely Stauter-Halstead, *The Devil's Chain: Prostitution and Social Control in Partitioned Poland* (Ithaca/London, 2015); Katie Hemphill, *Bawdy City: Commercial Sex and Regulation in Baltimore, 1790-1915* (Cambridge, 2020).

[28] Rachael Attwood, 'Stopping the Traffic: The National Vigilance Association and the International Fight against the "White Slave" Trade (1899-c.1909)', *Women's History Review*, 24/3 (2015), 325–50; Eva Payne, 'Deportation as Rescue: White Slaves, Women Reformers, and the US Bureau of Immigration', *Journal of Women's History*, 33/4 (2021), 40–66.

[29] Corbin, *Women for Hire*; Donna J. Guy, *Sex & Danger in Buenos Aires: Prostitution, Family, and Nation in Argentina* (1990); Stauter-Halstead, *Devil's Chain*.

[30] Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society*; Julia Laite, *Common Prostitutes and Ordinary Citizens: Commercial Sex in London, 1885-1960* (Basingstoke, 2011); Wingfield, *The World of Prostitution*; Stauter-Halstead, *Devil's Chain*.

[31] LaShawn Harris, *Sex Workers, Psychics, and Numbers Runners: Black Women in New York City's Underground Economy* (Chicago, 2016).

economic coercion as self-evident'.[32]

The success of this endeavour means that some historians disagree whether the study of prostitution should be seen primarily as within the field of labour history or rather as a subset of the history of sexuality. Some have argued that the study of prostitution should, in fact, not feature in the latter, due to self-understandings of women who sold sex of prostitution as work. Victoria Harris has contended, on the basis that 'prostitute is not a sexuality, it is not a sexual identity', that historians who view it as a subset of the history of sexuality use the term sexuality inappropriately.[33] Yet removing the study of prostitution from the history of sexuality entirely would diminish the historical context of contemporary understandings of prostitution and, indeed, how this shaped the working and private lives of women who sold sex. Ultimately, these debates also rest on our definition and subject of interest, for so often we find a fluidity between categories. Maria Höhn's study of post-war Germany, for instance, elucidates different conditions understood either as 'professional' prostitution, 'clandestine' prostitution, or 'soldiers' brides'.[34] To argue that historians who view prostitution as part of the history of sexuality as 'eshew[ing] experience over discourse', denies the impact of contemporary understandings of prostitution on the lives of those affected.[35] The history of sexuality, with its interest in 'deviance', has much to offer within its methodologies and literature. New strands which emphasise how sexual acts and identity can also diverge from each other would support its application. The study of prostitution enables us to explore its place at the intersection of labour history and the history of sexuality, to simultaneously draw from both disciplines whilst complicating dominant narratives.

Historical studies of prostitution in the wake of the 'sex wars' have repeatedly returned to the question of agency and resistance. Whilst some are accused of denying the women involved their agency, and presenting all women who sold sex as helpless victims, others are criticised for sentimentalising the life of those who worked as prostitutes, and for romanticising their actions as resistance.[36] Gail Hershatter has

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[32] Philippa Levine, 'Women and Prostitution: Metaphor, Reality, History', *Canadian Journal of History*, 1993, 482.

[33] Victoria Harris, 'Sex on the Margins: New Directions in the Historiography of Sexuality and Gender', *The Historical Journal*, 53/4 (2010), 1096.

[34] Maria Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins: The German-American Encounter in 1950s West Germany* (Chapel Hill/London, 2002).

[35] Harris, 'Sex on the Margins', 1096.

[36] Elizabeth Clement, 'Prostitution', in *Palgrave Advances in the Modern History of Sexuality*, ed. H. G. Cocks and Matt Houlbrook, 222.

argued that historians should 'resist the desire to magnify or romanticise' instances of agency and admit that 'our readings of them are limited by the many silences and irreducible ambiguities in the historical record'.[37] Stephen Robertson has similarly warned against the over-creation of narrative which obscures the limitations and uncertainties within our sources.[38] Yet actions taken by women who sold sex to negotiate their situation undoubtedly influenced the enactment of laws and regulation—for instance, when women took up legal challenges, took part in protests, negotiated with officers, or simply changed workplace and working habits. As Julia Laite argues, this is not because prostitutes are 'pluckier or more resourceful' than other people, but simply that people often act in ways they perceive as benefitting themselves or others. Laite has also highlighted that acts of resistance need not by definition be deemed positive, and points to the reliance on third-parties.[39]

In fact, numerous studies approach the questions of agency and resistance with the necessary nuance and reject simplifications.[40] They often look to highlight the voices and experiences of those who sold sex.[41] Historians who research 'trafficking' and migration have shown how it is possible to work with archival fragments and read against the grain.[42] Works which question the dominant binaries of agent and victim prove particularly valuable. Laite has recently used techniques of micro- and family history to contextualise the life of a woman deemed a traditional victim of 'white slavery', as well as the lives of her procurers/pimps/traffickers.[43] Sandy Chang, amongst others, employs the concept of intimate labour, taking a wider lens to investigate the commodification of intimacy to break down boundaries between sexual labour and care work, and move beyond traditional migration paradigms.[44] This work looks to the everyday negotiations which determined women's experiences of commercial sex.

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[37] Gail Hershatter, *Dangerous Pleasures: Prostitution and Modernity in Twentieth-Century Shanghai* (Berkeley, 1997), 28.

[38] Stephen Robertson, 'What's Law Got to Do with It? Legal Records and Sexual Histories', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 2005, 166.

[39] Laite, *Common Prostitutes*, 21.

[40] This contrasts with those who have seen prostitutes solely as the symbol of woman's patriarchal oppression: Joyce Outshoorn, 'The Political Debates on Prostitution and Trafficking of Women', *Social Politics*, 2005, 145–47.

[41] Clement, 'Prostitution', 220.

[42] Elisa Camiscioli, 'Coercion and Choice: The "Traffic in Women" between France and Argentina in the Early Twentieth Century', *French Historical Studies*, 42/3 (2019), 483–507; Tambe, *Codes of Misconduct*; Levine, *Prostitution, Race, and Politics*.

[43] Laite, *The Disappearance of Lydia Harvey*.

[44] See: Sandy Chang, 'Intimate Itinerancy: Sex, Work, and Chinese Women in Colonial Malaya's Brothel Economy, 1870s-1930s', *Journal of Women's History*, 33/4 (2021), 92–117.

Despite a wide geographical and thematic range evident amongst the studies referenced above, sexual labour in the second half of the twentieth century has largely escaped historical enquiry. This period has remained primarily the realm of sociologists, anthropologists, geographers, and feminist scholars. Recent historical explorations that bridge the divide, however, have shown the value of research which considers commercial sex in the context of post-WWII societies, including 'second-wave' feminism, city planning and globalisation.[45] Historians of earlier periods have linked prostitution policy to wider societal changes such as urbanisation or commerce, yet there remains an urgent need to explore such themes in the context of significant societal changes post-WWII.[46] My exploration of West Germany draws from the strengths of previous historical studies of prostitution to examine commercial sex in the context of post-war 'West'.

Historians of Germany, particularly those based in Germany, have been less numerous in their adoption of and enthusiasm for the historical study of commercial sex, or their participation in the historiographical and methodological debates outlined above. This is not to discount the body of work that has emerged on sexual labour, yet much of the work on Germany is restricted to largely isolated city studies or a focus on parliamentary debates. Often commercial sex features as one element in works with a different focus.[47]

In the 1990s it was first argued that, in the field of gender history, there is an 'atlantic divide' between German and Anglophone scholarship.[48] Kirsten Heinsohn and

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[45] Judith Walkowitz, 'Feminism and the Politics of Prostitution in Kings Cross in the 1980s', *Twentieth Century British History*, 2019, 1–33; Sonja Dolinsek, 'Gehandelte Frau oder unerwünschte Fremde? Zur Geschichte der Prostituierten als Migrantin in Deutschland (1950er-1980er Jahre)', *Ariadne*, 72 (2017), 66–73; idem., '"Kein Mädchenhandel mehr": Framing contests in der transnationalen Bekämpfung des Mädchenhandels', in *Grenzüberschreitende institutionalisierte Zusammenarbeit von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart,* ed. Christian Henrich-Franke and others (Baden-Baden, 2019), 385–416; Mareen Heying, *Huren in Bewegung: Kämpfe von Sexarbeiterinnen in Deutschland und Italien, 1980 bis 2001* (Essen, 2019); Samantha Caslin, *Save the Womanhood! Vice, Urban Immorality and Social Control in Liverpool, c. 1900-1976* (Liverpool, 2018); Samantha Caslin and Julia Laite, *Wolfenden's Women: Prostitution in Postwar Britain* (London, 2020); Havelková, 'Blaming All Women', 165–91.

[46] Stauter-Halstead, *Devil's Chain*, 9; Hemphill, *Bawdy City*.

[47] See: Sybille Steinbacher, *Wie der Sex nach Deutschland kam: Der Kampf um Sittlichkeit und Anstand in der frühen Bundesrepublik* (Munich, 2011); Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins*. It also features in local city studies: Alexander Kraus, *Stadt ohne Geschichte? Wolfsburg als Demokratielabor der Wirtschaftswunderzeit* (Göttingen, 2021).

[48] Kathleen Canning, 'German Particularities in Women's History/Gender History', *Journal of Women's History*, 1993, 102–14.

Claudia Kemper asserted in 2012 that gender history remained at the margins of historical research in Germany, despite diverse and outstanding research being undertaken by academics.[49] This marginalisation remains, with Christina von Hodenberg recently asserting that 'to a large extent, master surveys of the Federal Republic's history have failed to weave into their narratives the rise of female emancipation or challenges to male domination'.[50] Perhaps this explains why, in contrast with the marked interest in studies of prostitution produced in English, there has not been a comparable increase in German-language studies of commercial sex in Germany. There are several studies dating from the 1990s on pre-twentieth century developments—by Dietlind Hüchtker, Sybille Krafft, Regina Schulte, Beate Schuster and Peter Schuster, amongst others.[51] The number of Germany-based studies published since 2000 thus appear few in comparison. Often, they do not reference wider discussions on terminology, sources, and archives, suggesting that this research takes place outside of larger debates on the historical study of prostitution. The emergent publications by Mareen Heying, Steffi Brüning and Sonja Dolinsek suggest that this tendency is shifting, but there remains work to be done.

The restrictions of scholarship on prostitution in Germany become more comprehensible on closer inspection. The frequently changing legal context and the influence of German federalism, with decisions about policing left largely to the state, should not be underestimated.[52] The decisive impact of local police forces and city administrations in the interpretation of the law, proves particularly challenging to the

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[49] Kirsten Heinsohn and Claudia Kemper, *Geschlechtergeschichte*, Docupedia-Zeitgschichte, 2012 <http://docupedia.de/zg/heinsohn_kemper_geschlechtergeschichte_v1_de_2012 DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.14765/zzf.dok.2.254.v1>.

[50] Christina von Hodenberg, 'Writing Women's Agency into the History of the Federal Republic: "1968," Historians, and Gender', *CEH*, 52 (2019), 87–106.

[51] Dietlind Hüchtker, 'Prostitution und städtische Öffentlichkeit: Die Debatte über die Präsenz von Bordellen in Berlin 1792-1846', in *Ordnung, Politik und Geselligkeit der Geschlechter im 18. Jahrhundert*, ed. Ulrike Weckel and others (Göttingen, 1998); idem. '"Unsittlichkeit" als Kristallisationspunkt von Unsicherheit: Prostitutionspolitik in Berlin (1800-1850)', in *Unsichere Großstädte? Vom Mittelalter bis zu Postmoderne* (Konstanz, 2000); Sybille Krafft, *Zucht und Unzucht: Prostitution und Sittenpolizei im München der Jahrhundertwende* (Munich, 1996); Regina Schulte, *Sperrbezirke. Tugendhaftigkeit und Prostitution in der bürgerlichen Welt* (Hamburg, 1994); Beate Schuster, 'Frauenhandel und Frauenhäuser im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert', *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, 78 (1991), 172–89; Peter Schuster, '"Sünde und Vergebung": Integrationshilfen für reumütige Prostitutierte im Mittelalter', *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung*, 21/2 (1994), 145–70.

[52] See: Robert Stephens, *Germans on Drugs: The Complications of Modernization in Hamburg* (Ann Arbor, 2007), 8.

historian. Thus, studies have frequently focused on one aspect or phase of prostitution policy, or have researched its implementation in one city.

This focus typically means that prostitution policy can be explored with more nuance. Michaela Freund-Widder's study of Hamburg from the late German Empire to the early years of the Federal Republic illustrates how city studies can detect remarkable continuities in the state's control of prostitution despite changing legal frameworks. Through focussing on the city, Freund-Widder brings police and medical measures against women who sold sex to the fore. She simultaneously attempts to approach the experiences of women who were persecuted as prostitutes, an intention that is absent from much of the work on Germany.[53]

The usefulness of examining policy at the local level has remained evident throughout a range of temporal and locational contexts. Time and again the city study has allowed historians to tease out contradictory practices during regulation.[54] As Judith Walkowitz argued in 1980, however, the city-based study, for all its advantages, benefits from attempts to link it to wider developments.[55] This can be achieved by combining and comparing cities, as Victoria Harris sets out to do in *Selling Sex in the Reich* (2010). Harris focusses on Leipzig and Hamburg between 1914 and 1945, a generous time period which covers three different German regimes, yet conditions specific to each city do not come to the fore. Harris argues against interpreting 'radical rupture[s]' in prostitution policies in this period, including during the Nazi regime. *Selling Sex in the Reich* would benefit from wider reference to the wealth of recent scholarship, much of it avowedly feminist, which concerns itself with women's agency and experience. The work has been subject to criticism, in particular for its misrepresentation or dismissal of the scholarly field in general and, on occasion, the works of other scholars, but also for its over-reliance on published sources when searching for the aforementioned 'prostitute's voice'.[56] The intention to combine city

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[53]Michaela Freund-Widder, *Frauen unter Kontrolle: Prostitution und ihre staatliche Bekämpfung in Hamburg vom Ende des Kaiserreichs bis zu den Anfängen der Bundesrepublik* (Münster, 2003).

[54] Krafft, *Zucht und Unzucht*; Hüchtker, 'Prostitution und städtische Öffentlichkeit'; Lyndal Roper, 'Discipline and Respectability: Prostitution and the Reformation in Augsburg', *History Workshop Journal*, 19 (1985), 3–28.

[55] Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society*, 7. Hearne does this masterfully in her recent publication: Hearne, *Policing Prostitution*.

[56] Malte König, 'V. Harris, Selling Sex in the Reich', *Francia-Recensio* 4 (2011); Lutz Sauerteig, 'Victoria Harris. Selling Sex in the Reich: Prostitutes in German Society, 1914–1945', *The American Historical Review* (2012), 1312–1313; Julia Roos, 'Guest Post: Julia Roos' Response to Victoria Harris', *Weimar Studies Network*, 01.04.2012, https://wsn.hypotheses.org/687 [accessed: 20.05.2019].

studies over the course of multiple German regimes with a focus on experience remains a strength, although the weaknesses of the work limit its usefulness for this study.

Rather than detail the remaining scholarship on the history of prostitution in Germany in its entirety, it appears prudent to explore the three main themes around which scholarship of the twentieth century has clustered: (1) systems of and debates surrounding regulation, (2) the historical association of prostitution and venereal disease, and (3) prostitution during National Socialism.

In Germany, regulation was officially repealed by the 1927 Law on Combatting Venereal Diseases. Malte König analyses the parliamentary debates surrounding its abolition in Germany, Italy and France in comparative perspective. He pre-empts potential criticism by announcing the absence of the voices of women who sold sex in his work; König claims they are almost impossible to grasp ('kaum zu erfassen'), and, as they did not feature in the parliamentary debates, are not relevant to his argument.[57] However, König's own conclusion, that in Germany changes took place at the local level before entering the parliamentary debates, would suggest that an examination of opinions outside the explicit realm of parliamentary debate would benefit his argument.[58] Julia Roos explores the extra-parliamentary debates, in particular the backlash to the 1927 law, which she follows into the period of National Socialism. According to Roos, repressive trends of the Weimar years were taken over by the Nazi regime to consolidate power.[59] Pre-FRG attitudes, as well as the laws and police measures which regulated prostitution, were referenced throughout the twentieth century and thus these studies have relevance beyond their defined period of interest.

The legal association of prostitution and venereal disease in German law contributes to the central place of commercial sex in studies of German health policy. The works of Lutz Sauerteig, Ulrike Lindner, and Annette Timm are particularly relevant for this undertaking. Where Sauerteig explores the long history of German health policy in the nineteenth and early twentieth century with an emphasis on the control of venereal diseases, Lindner focuses on post-war health policy in Germany and

[57] Malte König, *Der Staat als Zuhälter: Die Abschaffung der reglementierten Prostitution in Deutschland, Frankreich und Italien im 20. Jahrhundert* (Berlin/Boston, 2016), 12.
[58] Ibid., 410.
[59] Julia Roos, 'Backlash against Prostitutes' Rights: Origins and Dynamics of Nazi Prostitution Policies', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 11/1/2 (2002), 67–94. She explores these arguments further in: idem., *Weimar through the Lens of Gender: Prostitution Reform, Woman's Emancipation, and German Democracy, 1919-33* (Ann Arbor, 2010).

Great Britain. Both stress the fear of VD, which they identify in repressive control measures, as well as contemporary understandings of VD as social, moral and societal problems.[60] Timm explores the links between prostitution policy and disease control in Nazi Germany and in post-war Berlin. Regarding the re-establishment of brothels in the 'Third Reich', Timm argues that the Nazi leadership were less concerned with disease control and rather used brothel visits as a reward, with sexual satisfaction (for men) as a central aim of these measures. However, she sees post-war disease control as operating within different parameters.[61] Although the post-war VD epidemics had been contained by the time my study begins, their influence in the debates leading up to the 1953 GBG was marked, with repercussions that reached into the 1960s, 1970s and beyond. With Timm and Lindner both considering the post-war period, their studies provide essential information on measures targeted at women suspected of prostitution or promiscuity.[62]

The widespread establishment of brothels through the whole of the German and German-occupied territories by the Nazi regime has attracted much attention, in part due to its seeming contradiction with policies which defined women who sold sex as 'asocial', a label which could lead to internment in a concentration camp. Although contradictions and hypocrisies in policies and practice of prostitution control are not restricted to Nazi Germany, this example appears striking. These studies are typically concerned with the issue of collaboration, or the level of freedom exhibited by women in camp brothels. Where Christa Paul used the term *Zwangsprostitution* (forced prostitution) in 1994, Christa Schikorra and Robert Sommer have since referred to *Zwangsarbeit* (forced labour) and *Sex-Zwangsarbeit* respectively.[63] These studies are complimented (and complicated) by Anna Hájková's nuanced work on sexual barter in prisoner societies.[64] Hájková has recently offered an important historiographical

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[60] Lutz Sauerteig, *Krankheit, Sexualität, Gesellschaft: Gechlechtskrankheiten und Gesundheitspolitik in Deutschland im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 1999); Ulrike Lindner, *Gesundheitspolitik in der Nachkriegszeit: Großbritannien und die Bundesrepublik Deutschland im Vergleich* (Munich, 2004).

[61] Annette Timm, *The Politics of Fertility in Twentieth-Century Berlin* (New York, 2010).

[62] The registration of 'hwG'-persons is absent from Melanie Arndt's study of health policy in divided Berlin; Melanie Arndt, *Gesundheitspolitik im geteilten Berlin 1948 bis 1961* (Cologne, 2009).

[63] Christa Paul, *Zwangsprostitution: Staatlich errichtete Bordelle im Nationalsozialismus* (Berlin, 1994); Christa Schikorra, *Kontinuitäten der Ausgrenzung: 'Asoziale' Häftlinge im Frauen-Konzentrationslager Ravensbrück* (Berlin, 2001), 224; Baris Alakus, Katharina Kniefacz and Robert Vorberg, eds., *Sex-Zwangsarbeit in nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslagern* (Vienna, 2006); Robert Sommer, *Das KZ-Bordell: Sexuelle Zwangsarbeit in nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslagern* (Paderborn, 2009).

[64] Anna Hájková, 'Sexual Barter in Times of Genocide: Negotiating the Sexual Economy of the Theresienstadt Ghetto', *Signs*, 38/3 (2013), 503–33; idem., 'Between Love and Coercion:

intervention which both interrogates the stigma around prostitution in Holocaust studies and critiques the 'simplistic and reductive views implied by the term "forced prostitution"'. In her exploration of unofficial, unorganised sexual barter by Holocaust victims—whether in the ghettos, in camps or in hiding—she uses the concept of sexual barter to acknowledge agency and highlight the significance of context and the insights that this can provide.[65] The debates regarding terminology and understandings of 'forced prostitution' and sexual barter have further global and thematic relevance, for they take place at the far end of the extremes of debates about sexual slavery and 'freely chosen' or 'empowering' prostitution.[66]

The extremes inherent in the Nazi period make the study of commercial sex in post-war Germany all the more important. The historical study of Nazi legacies in the Federal Republic has experienced a resurgence of interest corresponding to extended archival access. Recent works illustrate significant personnel continuities in various branches and positions of authority in both East and West.[67] In this work, I draw on studies which detail the continuities amongst local and national authorities, within the police and health offices, and in the terminology used to refer to women who sold sex.[68]

Only few studies of commercial sex in Germany reach into the second half of the twentieth century. Studies of the 1950s remain helpful points of departure for further work, however. In *GIs and Fräuleins* (2002), Maria Höhn explores the interactions between US soldiers and German women in 1950s garrison towns. She dedicates a chapter to the examination of 'clandestine' or unregistered prostitution in this context, by women known as 'Veronikas'. Her work is particularly strong in its recreation of reactions to the presence of African-American GIs in these rural German towns and the intersections of race, sexuality and prostitution which played out in the wake of their arrival.[69] More recent works that concern themselves with commercial sex past the

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Queer Desire, Sexual Barter and the Holocaust', *German History*, 39/1 (2021), 112–33; idem., 'Why We Need a History of Prostitution in the Holocaust', *ERH*, 2022.

[65] Ibid., 195.

[66] On the impact of the 'sex wars' on the study of commercial sex: Clement, 'Prostitution', 206–30.

[67] Some recent examples: Martin Sabrow and Christian Mentel, eds., *Das Auswärtige Amt und seine umstrittene Vergangenheit: Eine deutsche Debatte* (Frankfurt/Main, 2013); Frank Bösch and others, eds., *Die zentralen deutschen Behörden und der Nationalsozialismus: Stand und Perspektiven der Forschung* (Munich/Potsdam, 2016); Stefan Noethen, *Alte Kameraden und neue Kollegen: Polizei in Nordrhein-Westfalen: 1945-1953* (Essen, 2003).

[68] Continuities in welfare worker personnel feature in: Angelika Ebbinghaus, ed., *Opfer und Täterinnen: Frauenbiographien des Nationalsozialismus* (Nördlingen, 1987); Freund-Widder, *Frauen unter Kontrolle*.

[69] Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins*. The term 'Veronika' is a reference to venereal disease.

1950s are emerging and provide useful framing for my own project. Sascha Schießl's 2016 article on 1960s Göttingen concentrates on prostitution policy and addresses developments such as kerb crawling and the implementation of a *Sperrbezirk* or 'restricted area' in which solicitation is outlawed in public.[70] Sonja Dolinsek has focussed on the relationship to 'trafficking' and migration in her study of migrant prostitution in Germany.[71] Steffi Brüning has recently published the first historical monograph on prostitution in East Germany, in which she explores the role of health offices, police forces and the Ministry for State Security.[72] Mareen Heying takes the West German 'Whores' Movement' from the 1980s onwards as her focus. Her recent monograph comparing prostitute rights movements in Germany and Italy is one of the few works to consider prostitute activism in the FRG, a focus which informs the outlook of this study greatly.[73] These investigations all compliment this study of the experiences of women who sold sex in West Germany, in the context of new laws and regulations, as well as changing public discussions on migration and sexuality.

As an explicitly West German topic, this work speaks to scholarship on the Federal Republic and calls into question dominant narratives of the period. The "big" histories of liberalisation, democratisation, secularisation, and individualisation have been accused of becoming new master narratives, which ignore the challenges posed by explorations of gender and women's inequality.[74] This thesis joins in this critique. Cold War concerns, the 'economic miracle', the emergence of the peculiarly German welfare state, and the economic crisis of 1973 all shaped the development and management of commercial sex. Yet by turning to the experiences of women who sold sex, these topics, and in particular the persistent narrative of the liberalisation of West German society, are challenged or reframed.[75] In this undertaking, the thesis is bolstered by historical

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[70] Sascha Schießl, 'Von der Duldung zur Reglementierung: Städtische Prostitutionspolitik in Göttingen während der 1960er Jahre', *Body Politics*, 4 (2016), 113–40.

[71] Dolinsek, 'Gehandelte Frau?', 66–73.

[72] Steffi Brüning, *Prostitution in der DDR: Eine Untersuchung am Beispiel von Rostock, Berlin und Leipzig, 1968 bis 1989* (Berlin, 2020).

[73] Heying, *Huren in Bewegung*.

[74] Heinsohn/Kemper, *Geschlechtergeschichte*. Christina von Hodenberg, drawing on Lyndal Roper and Ute Frevert, illustrates how the master narratives are male-dominated, linking it to the demographics and structural hierarchies of the German historical profession more generally; von Hodenberg, 'Writing Women's Agency', 87–106 (see 88-89).

[75] Ulrich Herbert, 'Liberalisierung als Lernprozeß: Die Bundesrepublik in der deutschen Geschichte - eine Skizze', in *Wandlungsprozess in Westdeutschland: Belastung, Integration, Liberalisierung 1945-1980*, ed. idem. (Göttingen, 2002), 7–49. As Hearne and Dolinsek recently argued, 'approaching twentieth century European history through the history of prostitution complicates narratives of liberalization and progress': Sonja

studies which have looked to how West Germans experienced and participated in these developments, or those which expand whose experiences we consider in explorations of West Germany, including work on so-called 'guest workers'.[76] Historical explorations which examine the position(s) of women—on women and work, family, and the welfare state—are particularly pertinent to the study of commercial sex.[77]

Although the field of German contemporary history is diverse, there have been numerous calls from historians to further embrace the adoption of gender history and history of sexuality approaches to West German topics.[78] This study builds on those pioneers who have investigated questions of sexuality and sexual liberalisation in a West German context, in particular the works of Dagmar Herzog, Sybille Steinbacher and Elizabeth Heineman.[79] Yet it also places itself in a cohort of works which look to qualify and reframe the reach and timeline of the sexual liberalisation narrative.[80] Like

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Dolinsek and Siobhán Hearne, 'Introduction: Prostitution in Twentieth Century Europe', *ERH*, 29/2 (2022), 122.

[76] This includes attempts to view the 'economic miracle' and its associated processes of 'Americanisation' and the rise of a consumer society from a cultural history perspective, e.g., Hanna Schissler, ed., *The Miracle Years: A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949-1968* (Princeton, 2001). See, in particular: Rita Chin, *The Guest Worker Question in Postwar Germany* (Cambridge, 2007); Rita Chin and others, eds., *After the Nazi Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Germany and Europe* (Ann Arbor, 2009); Karin Hunn, *'Nächstes Jahr kehren wir zurück--': die Geschichte der türkischen 'Gastarbeiter' in der Bundesrepublik* (Göttingen, 2005); Monika Mattes, 'Migration und Geschlecht in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Ein historischer Rückblick auf die "Gastarbeiterinnen" der 1960/70er Jahre', *Femina Politica*, 2008, 19–28; Jennifer Miller, *Turkish Guest Workers in Germany: Hidden Lives and Contested Borders 1960s to 1980s* (Toronto, 2018); Lauren Stokes, '"Fear of the Family": Migration and Integration in West Germany, 1955-2000' (University of Chicago, 2016); Julia Woesthoff, 'Ambiguities of Anti-Racism: Representations of Foreign Laborers and the West German Media, 1955-1990' (Michigan State University, 2004).

[77] R. G. Moeller, *Protecting Motherhood: Women and the Family in the Politics of Postwar Germany*, 1993; Gunilla-Friederike Budde, *Frauen arbeiten: Weibliche Erwerbstätigkeit in Ost- und Westdeutschland nach 1945* (Göttingen, 1997); Elizabeth Heineman, *What Difference Does a Husband Make? Women and Marital Status in Nazi and Postwar Germany* (Berkeley, 1999); Christiane Kuller, 'Who Cares? Gender, Poverty and Welfare in West Germany', in *Poverty and Welfare in Modern German History*, ed. Lutz Raphael (New York, 2017), 172–96; Eva-Maria Silies, *Liebe, Lust und Last: die Pille als weibliche Generationserfahrung in der Bundesrepublik 1960-1980* (Göttingen, 2010).

[78] See: Julia Paulus, Eva-Maria Silies and Kerstin Wolff, *Zeitgeschichte als Geschlechtergeschichte: Neue Perspektiven auf die Bundesrepublik* (Frankfurt/Main, 2012); Angelika Epple and Angelika Schaser, eds., *Gendering Historiography: Beyond National Canons* (Frankfurt/Main, 2009).

[79] Dagmar Herzog, *Sex after Fascism: Memory and Morality in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Princeton, 2005); Steinbacher, *Wie der Sex*; Heineman, *What Difference?*; idem., *Before Porn Was Legal: The Erotica Empire of Beate Uhse* (Chicago, 2011).

[80] See; Dagmar Herzog, 'Die "Sexuelle Revolution" in Westeuropa und ihre Ambivalenzen', in *Sexuelle Revolution? Zur Geschichte der Sexualität im deutschsprachigen Raum seit den 1960er Jahren*, ed. Peter-Paul Bänziger and others (Bielefeld, 2015), 348.

Craig Griffith's work on the ambivalence of Gay Liberation in Germany, or von Hodenberg's revision of '1968', this thesis argues that commercial sex disrupts conventional understandings of Germany's post-war social history.[81] The historical study of prostitution has time and again challenged many common historical assumptions. This remains the case for my study of the management of commercial sex in Hamburg, Cologne and West Berlin.

In my work, I look to existing scholarship to address the question of terminology, particularly as numerous historical terms—including prostitute, pimp, trafficking—continue to be used uncritically by many today.[82] The term 'prostitute' is loaded with preconceptions and stigma; it has been employed as job description, as moral judgement, and as all-encompassing identity. Classifying women as representative of an 'immoral' sexual identity, in binary opposition to other 'moral' citizens, has obscured a diversity of backgrounds, attitudes and experiences. The alternative term 'sex worker' is now preferred by many feminist scholars, activists, and governmental agencies, having originated as a self-description by women who sold sex in the early 1980s, in the struggle for sex worker rights. However, it cannot be removed from the politicised context of its creation and continued use and is often seen as anachronistic in historical studies. There is no consensus among historians on which terminology is most fitting. Some choose to use the terms 'sex worker' and 'prostitute' interchangeably.[83] Whilst many people who sell sex today choose the term as a description of their own labour, this study maintains that it is anachronistic to use it to describe those who lived and worked before this term was in use.

A legal term used in my period of study is 'gewerbsmässige Unzucht', which is both imprecise and filled with moral judgement, yet is a key term that determined action taken against individuals.[84] When women who sold sex were discussed in the source material, they were referred to under various names and guises: as 'Dirnen', 'HwG-

[81] Craig Griffiths, *The Ambivalence of Gay Liberation: Male Homosexual Politics in 1970s West Germany* (Oxford, 2021); Christina von Hodenberg, *Das andere Achtundsechzig: Gesellschaftsgeschichte einer Revolte* (Munich, 2018).

[82] On the term 'trafficking': Philippa Hetherington and Julia Laite, 'Introduction to the Issue: Trafficking, a Useless Category of Historical Analysis?', *Journal of Women's History*, 33/4 (2021), 7–39.

[83] See: Rachel Hynson, '"Count, Capture, and Reeducate": The Campaign to Rehabilitate Cuba's Female Sex Workers, 1959/1966', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 24/1 (2015), 125–53.

[84] This can be loosely translated as 'professional/commercial debauchery'.

Personen', or simply as 'Prostituierte'. Here I face an additional challenge, where terms used in the German context and in German-language sources do not always map on to English language terms or their etymologies. The term 'hwG' (*häufig wechselnder Geschlechtsverkehr*) is particularly tricky. An abbreviation that loosely translates to 'habitually promiscuous', it was used by health office staff to categorise women deemed at high risk of spreading venereal diseases. Moreover, the term prostitution itself remains at its core unclear. Elizabeth Clement sees the problem of definition as one of the 'fundamental problems of the historical study of prostitution'.[85] A range of labour circumstances and services, as well as a myriad of intimate relations have been subsumed under this term, with legal and cultural definitions of prostitution often diverging. The commonly accepted definition of the exchange of sexual acts for money does not acknowledge the range of activities now commonly understood under 'sex work', nor does 'sex work' capture the multiple dimensions of 'prostitution' in the historical sources. One possible alternative is 'sexual labour', which both emphasises the occupational aspect and the range of actions and experiences addressed. Nevertheless, it falls short when one considers the use of 'prostitution' or 'prostitute' to describe sexual activities which did not involve the explicit exchange of money, e.g. sexual intercourse between young unmarried couples, but were deemed immoral. Recent historical literature has tended to use terms interchangeably, but to avoid using the term 'prostitute' in a way which suggests an all-encompassing identity. In the following, I use both 'prostitute' or preferably terms such as 'women who sold sex'. In this way, I recognise when the criminalised or stigmatising nature of the term prostitute is central to my analysis, but also reflect when, in the 1980s, members of the West German 'Whores' Movement' proclaimed 'we are prostitutes, and we stand by it'.[86]

Methodology

Although the sale of sex or sexual services was not illegal under West German law, women who sold sex found themselves facing a number of regulations and restrictions which governed both working and private life. Whilst some restrictions can be traced

[85] Clement, 'Prostitution', 207. Clement's work on sexual barter or 'treating' illustrates this further: Elizabeth Clement, *Love for Sale: Courting, Treating, and Prostitution in New York City, 1900-1945* (Chapel Hill, 2006).

[86] 'Steckbrief der Solidarität Hamburger Huren', 351-18-396, StHH. See: Elizabeth Bernstein, *Temporarily Yours: Intimacy, Authenticity, and the Commerce of Sex* (Chicago, 2007), 18.; Barbara Havelková, 'Blaming All Women: On Regulation of Prostitution in State Socialist Czechoslovakia', *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies*, 36/1 (2016), 165–91.

back to West German federal law, such as the outlawing of brothels enshrined in the 1953 Law on Combatting Venereal Diseases (an updated version of the 1927 venereal diseases law) or the paragraphs against procuring (*Kuppelei*) and pimping (*Zuhälterei*) in the West German criminal code, the majority of regulations and policing practices that determined the lives of women who sold sex were developed, enacted and negotiated primarily at the local level. City administrations and police departments developed measures to 'control' visible evidence of prostitution in the cityscape, thus restricting the movements and actions of those who sold sex. By examining laws and regulations in their implementation I evaluate measures which often functioned in direct contradiction to the provisions of federal law. My choice to focus on the city level allows for the inclusion of individual actors in different realms, both within health offices and the police, but also across the city itself.

The city focus also encourages a closer exploration of the many negotiations involved in the conception and execution of new policies of 'prostitution control'. In this work I use three city studies—Cologne, Hamburg and West Berlin—to explore both the varying policies and regulations themselves but also their impact in practice—how these measures were *developed* and *negotiated* at the individual level, by police officers, welfare workers, city administration, clients, by women who sold sex, and by those residents of the city looking to eliminate evidence of prostitution. This focus on the city level also allows for the inclusion of inconsistent policing practices or acts of resistance in the analysis. In this way, it is influenced by work in the field of urban history and the call to approach cities 'not as fixed entities, but as nodes of relationships between people, space, and the research methods used to examine them'.[87] Considerations of scale which emphasise the important role of individuals are paired with such understandings of the city.[88] This work foregrounds the importance of individual action and reaction in the determination of the forms and spaces of sexual labour in West German cities.

The three cities which build the focus of this work—Cologne, Hamburg, and West Berlin—differed from each other in ways which shaped the forms and control of sexual labour in the city and examining all three allows me to develop a more varied

[87] Nicolas Kenny and Rebecca Madgin, eds., *Cities Beyond Borders: Comparative and Transnational Approaches to Urban History* (Surrey, 2015), 4.

[88] My exploration of negotiations at the individual level is influenced by discussions of scale in historical work, in particular those concerning what Brewer has termed 'refuge history'; John Brewer, 'Microhistory and the Histories of Everyday Life', *Cultural and Social History*, 7/1 (2010), 87–109.

and nuanced exploration of commercial sex in this period. With the formation of the Federal Republic in 1949, each occupied a different legal status, which affected the power accorded to local government within the federal system. Cologne was the largest city (although not political capital) in the new federal state of North-Rhine Westphalia (NRW). Hamburg, by contrast, was both city and federal state, and administrators decided issues at both levels. West Berlin, although it eventually began to function as a de facto eleventh state, occupied a more complicated position. Technically not a part of the FRG, instead governed by the Allied-commanders-in-chief, all legislation needed their confirmation before it applied in West Berlin. Although much difference was hidden in day-to-day life, the city's peculiar status played out in numerous ways, with its inhabitants unable to vote in the elections to the German parliament, unable to turn to the constitutional court, and ineligible for military service.[89] Thus, the governments of the three cities all had a different scope for action and reaction.

The formation of the FRG and the division of Germany affected the three cities in ways that also went beyond their city status. For Cologne, the decision to make neighbouring Bonn the new capital brought with it access and proximity to an important political centre, as Cologne became home to numerous embassies, consulates, as well as various commercial agencies and cultural institutes. Several politicians chose Cologne over Bonn as their new residence, whilst the first Federal Chancellor Konrad Adenauer was the city's former mayor and, in the years 1953 to 1965, father to the city's chief municipal director (*Oberstadtdirektor*).[90] West Berlin, by contrast, had to adapt to the loss of its status as capital, as well as the loss of territory in the East of the city and its surroundings. Here, the division of the city itself meant Berlin's bureaucracy needed to be rebuilt from the ground up, with the city's inhabitants divided and surrounded on all sides. Hamburg's geographical location only 50 kilometres from the inner-German border also effectively cut it off from many long-established trade links. It remained an important port, with the harbour continuing to shape its nature, yet the decline of its trading power, along with the decline of the ship-building industry, resulted in a shift away from the harbour as central employer of the city.

Despite losing power as a trading hub and employer, Hamburg's harbour retained its traditional association with prostitution. One contemporary commented,

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[89] Wilfried Rott, *Die Insel: Eine Geschichte West-Berlins 1948-1990* (Munich, 2009), 7.

[90] Carl Dietmar and Werner Jung, *Köln: Die große Stadtgeschichte* (Essen, 2015); Peter Fuchs, ed., *Chronik zur Geschichte der Stadt Köln* (Cologne, 1991), II; Werner Schäfke, ed., *Das neue Köln 1945-1995: eine Ausstellung des Kölnischen Stadtmuseums* (Cologne, 1995); *idem.*, *Köln nach 1945: die Geschichte unserer Gegenwart* (Rheinbach, 2017).

‘nowhere in Germany does prostitution play a larger role in its open form than in Hamburg. […] No other port is more celebrated on all the seven seas as Hamburg’s, or rather St. Pauli’s’.[91] The latter, known for its central axis the Reeperbahn and historic brothel street the Herbertstraße, had a reputation that reached far beyond Germany’s borders.[92] Many of Hamburg’s residents, however, saw St. Pauli as primarily for tourists, whilst the city’s St. Georg area around the central train station was home to a similarly bustling sex industry.[93]

Hamburg’s historic association with prostitution makes it a valuable case study and counterpoint to the other two cities, which, despite the considerable size and scope of their sex industries did not have the same level of contemporary (or current) association with transactional sex. Unlike Protestant Hamburg, Cologne was historically Catholic, and thus also offers the opportunity to assess developments in local religious and cultural contexts. Although the percentage of the city’s inhabitants who were avowedly Catholic decreased over the course of the twentieth century, the city’s traditional association with Catholicism remained influential.

The choice to include West Berlin as the third case is, in many ways, an impractical one. Its outpost status, links to the GDR and constant military presence gave it, for many contemporaries, a sense of danger. West German citizens were financially encouraged to take up residence there, with the government offering new residents tax reductions of up to 20%, a move referred to by contemporaries as the ‘shiver bonus’ (*Zitterprämie*).[94] Measures such as these encouraged those of lesser means, including young people or immigrants, to move to the ‘island city’, surrounded by East Germany. The city also achieved a reputation as alternative, with some moving there explicitly to avoid military service, whilst the Free University in the city’s south is seen as the origin of the West German student movement in the 1960s. West Berlin’s inclusion in this comparative study requires a familiarity with developments in East Berlin, particularly due to its relatively porous border up until the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961. The impact of the Berlin Wall was significant, for the closed off borders re-orientated the city, changing also the locations and participants of the city’s commercial sex. These wide-ranging effects post-1961 thus also add to the difficulties involved in including this study in the comparison.

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[91] Alexander, *Prostitution in Deutschland*, 27.
[92] See Julia Sneeringer, ‘“Assembly Line of Joys”: Touring Hamburg’s Red Light District, 1949-1966’, *CEH*, 42/1 (2009), 65–96.
[93] Alexander, *Prostitution in Deutschland*, 36.
[94] Wolfgang Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000: Grundzüge der Stadtgeschichte* (Berlin, 2002), 101, 132.

With its changing structures West Berlin is in many ways an anomaly. Yet, in Cold War Germany, with Berlin as a staging ground of two political systems, it took on a symbolic role stretching further than the city boundaries. Due to its proximity to the East, West Berlin was conceptualised as a 'showcase' of the FRG and of capitalism.[95] The interplay between its representative function and concern for local developments and influences, in which decisions could and did contradict 'mainland' FRG, allows for the exploration of a 'third way' in the management of prostitution in the city, which also, in turn, fed back into ideas of what modern Germany represented.

Although my choice to focus on cities means this is a study solely of urban prostitution, Hamburg, Cologne and West Berlin offer a large diversity of forms of sexual labour and attempts to control them. They illustrate how local contexts played a decisive role in the surveillance and development of urban commercial sex in the long 1960s and 1970s. Some enactments I see as primarily shaped by the peculiarities of that city, such as the interactions between prostitution policy and West Berlin's status as outpost city. Where possible, however, I include references to measures or developments in other cities, particularly when contemporaries used these as comparison points. I do not set out to explore commercial sex in its entirety in this period, but rather explore typicalities and anomalies to provide an exploration of commercial sex in the Federal Republic that goes beyond the confines of the singular city study.

Whilst comparative history has attracted a large body of criticism, there remains a level of uncertainty amongst historians as to what comparative historical study involves. Whereas some scholars have argued that comparison functions solely to tease out causalities, others have worked comparatively to achieve varying aims.[96] Much of the criticism of comparative history has centred on the unit of comparison as the nation, with national identity as the basis of the comparison, a focus which has led to the widely-propagated if misleading argument that comparative history consolidates ideas of national difference.[97] Further criticisms also often rest on this assumption, albeit less directly, as some argue that the additional work involved in comparing cases leads to the tendency to generalise and rely more heavily on secondary literature. Many comparative histories have, in fact, moved beyond the comparison of nations to

[95] Arndt, *Gesundheitspolitik im geteilten Berlin*, 14.
[96] Jürgen Kocka, 'Comparison and Beyond', *History and Theory*, 42/1 (2003), 41.
[97] Philippa Levine, 'Is Comparative History Possible?', *History and Theory*, 53/3 (2014), 333.

compare cities or states, to combat perceived problems of scale or generalisation.[98] Although this study is formed as a comparison of cities rather than nations, and rests primarily on archival research rather than secondary literature, it remains worthy of emphasis that comparison can, just as easily, lead to the deconstruction of categories and assumptions, such as that of the nation-state, and perform instead a 'denormalising function'.[99]

This denormalising function is central to the thesis. Through comparison, the varying interpretations of and reactions to federal law take on a new significance that cannot be recognised if viewed in isolation. With local administrators, jurists, and police representatives arguing in the sources for their implicit interpretation of the law or strategy for the containment of commercial sex, the inclusion of perspectives and arguments from other West German cities, each responding to the same federal law in differing ways, is invaluable. The diverging management of the legacy of the brothel streets turned 'prostitute residences'—evident in the comparison of Cologne's Kleine Brinkgasse with Hamburg's Herbertstraße—is just one example of this function. The inclusion of a third city, West Berlin, as a further counterpoint and more radically different case again serves to complicate assertions claimed to be axiomatic. Each city study, through the comparison, changes our understanding of its counterparts and brings nuance to the study of commercial sex in this period.

The three cities were shaped by diverging contexts and concerns, yet they did not exist as discrete entities. The management of prostitution by police or health offices was shaped by wider networks, with contemporaries often undertaking their own comparisons, between cities and federal states, to inform their next steps. Although the city remains the primary unit of analysis in the following work, different layers of transparencies, at city, state, national, and, on occasion, supra-national level, combined to create a mesh of laws, regulations and attitudes which determined the lives of those who sold sex. This is evident in the development of *Sperrbezirke* or 'restricted areas' for commercial sex; policies and ordinances were developed at the local level, in correspondence with other cities, fed into national law and then applied across the Federal Republic. Larger scale back-and-forth communication between city and national levels, as well as the contemporary city and state comparisons, all influenced the forms

[98] Katarina Friberg, Mary Hilson and Natasha Vall, 'Reflections on Trans-National Comparative History from an Anglo-Swedish Perspective', *Historisk Tidskritt*, 2007, 734.
[99] Deborah Cohen and Maura O'Connor, eds., *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective* (New York/London, 2004), xvi.

‘prostitution control’ took and the ways in which women could counter the restrictions placed upon them. Thus, although I approach Cologne, Hamburg and West Berlin comparatively, this is not to neglect or discount various other levels of influence, including cooperation between cities. Despite the tension between ‘entangled histories’ and comparative approaches, they are not incompatible. This study shows it is possible to tease out similarities and differences, as well as the various entanglements, between cities.[100]

The remit of this work leaves us with a ‘web of comparative, interlocking histories’.[101] Yet, these histories, as Elizabeth Heineman found in her study of marital status in Nazi Germany, West Germany and East Germany, are also shaped by significantly differing archive remnants. One of the central differences found when researching Cologne, Hamburg and West Berlin are the sources that remain, an unevenness only exacerbated by closures during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although each city is covered by state or city archives which hold files from city administration, police and health offices of the period, the impact and visibility of commercial sex in the archive varies significantly. This uneven record illustrates the dependence of the argument on surviving sources. The record, and how it came to be, thus must also play a part in the comparison. Due to archival and source restrictions, the chapters are not constructed with an equal weighting of the cities under focus. Nevertheless, evidence of divergent decisions and paths left untaken illustrates precisely the strength of the comparison’s ‘denormalisation’ of arguments and approaches to managing commercial sex.

Commercial sex in the archives

In assessing the archival traces of commercial sex, I follow the call to move from an analysis that views ‘archive-as-source’ to one that views ‘archive-as-subject’.[102] The comparative approach of this work highlights the unevenness of the records which determine our interpretation of commercial sex in the period. In part, differing records are a reflection of different priorities in the management of prostitution at the city levels. This is clearest in the files of local police and health offices. Where the police retained a department for ‘Sitte’ (morality) crimes, and continued to record the details of women selling sex, the files preserved are of a different nature and volume. Similarly,

[100] Kocka, ‘Comparison and Beyond’, 44.
[101] Heineman, *What Difference?*, xv.
[102] Ann Stoler, ‘Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance’, *Archival Science*, 2002, 93.

when health office surveillance of women deemed to be prostitutes was centralised and separated from the general record of patients supposedly at risk of spreading venereal disease, as in Hamburg, there remains a more coherent body of sources from which to explore the impact of city health offices on the lives of women who sold sex. For West Berlin, in contrast, the management of 'known prostitutes' was split between district health offices and subsumed in general measures for women deemed 'hwG', thus the distinction in the remaining files becomes far less clear. At the same time, local police forces largely stopped policing public order crimes related to commercial sex in this period. Here, criminal cases involving women selling sex must be teased out from court and prison records. More generally, with the official abolition of state-regulated prostitution, information or records on those who sold sex become less clearly signposted, making it necessary to find evidence elsewhere, often in files ostensibly with a different purview. Records on brothels, and commercial sex in general, are most prominent in the catalogue of the Hamburg state archive, responsible for a city long associated with prostitution. It has also preserved sources which allow us to trace, in part, the process of archiving itself.[103] Surviving correspondences between archive and health ministry used to determine which records were to be archived and which to be destroyed, help us to read the 'archives not as sites of knowledge retrieval but of knowledge production'.[104] Not only the archivists, but the authorities themselves could and did play a significant role in determining what files were preserved.

Importantly, this project has had to contend with the loss of or destruction of files. Sources regarded as unimportant, and therefore unworthy of preservation, such as lower level municipal court records regarding issues of public disturbance, which could contain information on the ways selling sex continued to be criminalised, are often discarded in favour of records traditionally deemed more worthy of preservation.[105] These assessments can vary between archives, and in doing so reveal perceptions of what is and was deemed important in the respective locations. As Gilfoyle argues, sensitive material in the archives regarding sexuality is often disproportionately destroyed as part of self-censorship processes.[106] Hamburg health offices presented

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[103] *Staatsarchiv* director to *Gesundheitsbehörde Organisationsabteilung*, 16.08.1965, 352-6-4687, StHH.

[104] Stoler, 'Colonial Archives', 90.

[105] Gilfoyle names this as a general problem: Timothy Gilfoyle, 'Prostitutes in the Archives: Problems and Possibilities in Documenting the History of Sexuality', *American Archivist*, 57 (1994), 514–27.

[106] Ibid., 524.

issues of privacy and medical confidentiality as concerns in deciding which files to retain.[107] The loss of records has, however, also happened due to accident, as in the case of the Cologne city archive, whose building collapsed in March of 2009. The resulting restoration process has proven a costly procedure, with salvageable documents often surviving isolated from their context. The full impact of this accident remains undetermined, although health office files from the period under examination are largely unrecovered. Information regarding the policing of commercial sex in Cologne is retained by the state archive (*Landesarchiv NRW*). In general, due to the level of communication between cities, other city and state archives can also provide information that might have been destroyed or remain inaccessible. Ultimately, the comparison of the archives of Hamburg, Cologne and West Berlin illustrates the archive's impact on the narratives and interpretations it is possible to produce. In future, as yet unarchived files will likely expand insights into the period.[108]

The city and state archives, although their holdings vary, contain a mixture of bureaucratic files from which it is possible to glean information on the level of surveillance and imposition into women's lives. These records—from the police, the courts, the city administration or the health ministries—often include pockets of rich detail and fragmented insights into the lives of women who came into contact with the authorities, only to once again fall from the historical record. Sources such as witness testimonies, although they must be seen as mediated and transcribed, remain valuable for what they do and do not say about women's situations.

Although court, police and city administrative records play a significant role in this study, I also respond to historians who have insisted on the need to combine different types of sources, and to 'mix and contrast archives'.[109] Local newspapers are invaluable, for, in addition to media portrayals of local developments, protests and scandals, they also functioned as a key method of communication between those selling sex and their potential clients. Through coded advertisements in the classified sections 'models' and 'masseuses' made contact with readers. The inclusion of literature created for potential clients, such as city guidebooks and maps 'for men' supplements this

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[107] 'Vernichtung abgelaufener Vepflichtungsscheine', 16.06.1965, 352-6-4687.

[108] This is certainly the case at the PHS, where Berlin *Kripo* files will soon become accessible.

[109] Gilfoyle, 'Prostitutes in the Archives', 522; Stephen Legg, 'Anti-Vice Lives: Peopling the Archives of Prostitution in Interwar India', in *Fighting Drink, Drugs, and 'Immorality'...*, ed. Jessica Pliley, Robert Kramm-Masaoka, and Harald Fischer-Tiné, 2. The use of 'alternate archives' is a common call in postcolonial studies: Anjali Arondekar, 'Without a Trace: Sexuality and the Colonial Archive', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 14/1/2 (2005), 11.

picture by exploring another constellation of actors often neglected from studies of sexual labour: the clients. For the later period of interest, material created by prostitute activist groups further complicates the impressions gleaned and provides self-descriptions by women who sold sex, which stem from outside of the confines of the courtroom or the police station. By combining different types of sources produced by a range of actors, and playing them against each other, this work goes beyond a simple analysis of the policies themselves and provides insights into the multi-faceted and changing forms and spaces of sexual labour in the three cities.

It remains difficult to approach the lives of women who sold sex in the long 1960s and 1970s. However, through the use of varying archives, through comparing three cities, and through foregrounding interactions and negotiations at the city level, I look to counter narratives reliant on federal law or media coverage. The conclusions I reach vary from city to city, yet in unison illustrate the adaptations at city level which underpinned larger developments in this period. This study of three cities cannot be taken as representative of all of West Germany, nor is this my intention. It can, however, through the study of commonalities and differences as well as of the cooperation and exchange of ideas and experiences across cities and states, reach beyond city boundaries and offer conclusions about the Federal Republic in this period as well as the post-war 'West' in general.

Chapter One of this work introduces changes which preceded the 1960s and 1970s. This includes the development of new legislation and its impact in practice. It explores the provisions of the 1953 Law on Combatting Venereal Diseases (GBG)—in particular the reinforced abolition of regulation and brothels and the re-introduction of health office measures to register 'hwG'-persons—against the backdrop of previous legislation. The legacies of regulation, such as the 'prostitute residences' in former 'brothel streets' prove central to understanding the contradictions inherent in prostitution policy in this period. The chapter also examines the impact of the GBG on policing practices, highlighting the curtailed power of local forces to act against women suspected of selling sex. It introduces early examples of cities experimenting with illegal methods of restricting prostitution spatially and being thwarted by municipal court judgements.

Chapters Two to Five are divided thematically and each explore developments over the course of the 1960s and 1970s. The conceptualisation of commercial sex as a health issue forms the theme of **Chapter Two**. This focusses on the varied

implementation of the GBG in Hamburg, Cologne and West Berlin, in particular the work of health offices in registering women deemed 'hwG'. The cooperation between health and police departments in patrolling the city is central to the comparison. The chapter then explores how women targeted by measures designed to curb the spread of venereal disease negotiated the restrictions placed on them.

Chapter Three departs from the exploration of different policies and turns instead to wide array of forms and spaces of commercial sex over the period. The chapter follows by exploring the legacy of understandings of prostitutes as 'asocial' or 'work-shy', how this persisted in the field of social work and the use of the workhouse as punishment.

The association of sexual labour with crime is the focus of **Chapter Four**. It examines continued police department involvement in the surveillance of commercial sex and covers the policing of bars and monitoring of the supposed 'criminal underworld' in Cologne, Hamburg, and West Berlin. The chapter traces the use of migration law, drug policy, and the *Kuppelei* and *Zuhälterei* paragraphs of the criminal code to control prostitution. A central concern of this chapter is the understanding of prostitutes as both victims and perpetrators of crime.

Chapter Five is dedicated to the treatment of commercial sex as an issue of public order. It begins with a comparison of the development of *Sperrbezirke* or 'restricted areas' in Cologne and Hamburg, their effect on and circumvention by women who had previously solicited on the street. This is followed by a discussion of the management of the old 'brothel streets' and the opening of the new Eros-Centers—the intention of city administrators in allowing their development, and the conditions in practice for women who took up residence there. The chapter includes a comparison to West Berlin's different path in managing the city's sex industry, without recourse to *Sperrbezirk* or Eros-Center.

In **Chapter Six** I provide a briefer examination of the commercial sex in the 1980s, to assess the legacies and ruptures that followed the 1960s and 1970s. The chapter introduces the increased association of sexual labour with drugs, as well as with the spread of HIV/AIDs. Debates surrounding 'trafficking' and sex tourism also provide a backdrop to developments. The ways these issues were addressed by West Germany's emerging 'Whores' Movement', in particular by Berlin group Hydra, forms a central part of this section.

In conclusion to this work I offer arguments regarding the changing place of commercial sex in the Federal Republic. I place them in the context of the period's

relative economic security (at least pre-1973) as well as ostensible processes of sexual liberalisation, including in the legal sphere. I draw together my explorations of the relations of sexual labour to health, public order and public space, crime, and work, to address the question of how measures were developed, enacted and experienced at the local level, and to determine whether any unifying tendencies between the three cities can be identified. The conclusion assesses how the study of commercial sex in this period illuminates new aspects of the history of West Germany, and contributes to an emerging conversation about prostitution in the post-war 'West'.

Although sometimes viewed as a marginal phenomenon, the study of commercial sex has significance for larger historical debates, particularly those focussing on the changing West German state after the initial post-war years. Its wide-reaching relevance is reflected in the four thematic chapters—on health, labour, crime, and public order. These themes highlight the impact of the social welfare and criminal justice systems on those involved in the sex industry and resolutely challenge the dominant sexual liberalisation narrative in German historiography. The lives of women who sold sex were enmeshed in West German society. Including their experiences does not simply shed light on the margins, but goes to the foundations of West German society, its institutions and urban life.

1. *Prologue*: Before 1960

Whether a woman sold sex in Hamburg, Cologne or West Berlin, her actions fell under a number of federal laws which governed commercial sex in West Germany.[110] Despite the resulting commonalities, however, local contexts, laws, and regulations remained decisive in determining how, where and when she chose to work. Local differences rested on several factors. In part, this derived from the specificities of the West German federal system, which devolved decision-making on numerous issues such as control over policing to the federal states (*Länder*). Often, however, local authorities, police forces, or health offices also developed systems of managing and problematising commercial sex that deviated from neighbouring cities. This variation was not a new phenomenon. Local authorities and city police forces had, across the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, developed and enacted systems of control that diverged from national or federal law in how they determined the lives of women who sold sex.

By the time of German unification in 1871, many German towns had established separate local systems of state-regulated prostitution. These were historically termed regulationist (*Reglementierung*) and typically subjected registered women to numerous restrictions on their personal freedoms. Women officially registered as prostitutes were required to live in police-approved lodgings, were banned from certain areas of the city and often required police permission to travel. Compulsory frequent medical exams for venereal disease (VD) were a standard feature of these systems, although the punishments for violation of regulations varied. Registered women often had no, or little, recourse to the courts.[111] In the German context regulation was decentralised, developing prior to the unification of the German states, although with many unifying factors. By the early 1800s, for instance, most towns had established a *Sittenpolizei* (vice police) force to implement restrictions on women who sold sex.[112] The precise forms, however, of regulation practiced in German towns or cities, and the level of acceptance of these forms amongst the populace, changed significantly according to time or location.

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[110] West Berlin, although not officially a member state of the Federal Republic, implemented the laws separately to bring it in line with West Germany.

[111] For more, see: Roos, *Weimar through the Lens*, 16–21.

[112] Lynn Abrams, 'Prostitutes in Imperial Germany, 1870-1918: Working Girls or Social Outcasts?', in *The German Underworld: Deviants and Outcasts in German History*, ed. Richard Evans (London, 1988), 109.

Crucially, regulation was implemented only against *women* who sold sex. As Martin Lücke has noted, sources on commercial sex remain focussed primarily on female prostitution—largely because of the legal separation of women and men who sold sex. In his work on the German empire and the Weimar Republic, Lücke has identified the treatment of women who sold sex as regulationist, whilst men who sold sex were subject to a prohibitionist regime, which criminalised the sex act itself.[113] The differentiated treatment on the basis of sex by police, the courts, and the medical profession continued in West Germany across the twentieth century, although male-male sex was decriminalised in the legal reforms of 1969-1973.

Regulation was by no means a solely German phenomenon. While France appears to have been the first country to institutionalise the registration of women who sold sex, historians have identified regulation systems in Europe and beyond. In Italy, regulation developed locally pre-unification, but was made official policy across all Italian communes in Italy by the Cavour Regulation of 1860.[114] In the British case, regulation was implemented under the Contagious Diseases (CD) Acts. In mainland Britain, this was restricted to individual ports and army towns yet, as Phillipa Levine, Philip Howell and others have shown, virtually all British colonies in the mid-nineteenth century were subject to regulation.[115] Over the nineteenth century, regulation spread also to the Austro-Hungarian empire, Russia, the Netherlands, and the colonies of the French, Spanish, and Ottoman empires.[116] In the twentieth century, whilst other countries were abandoning regulation in favour of alternative systems of managing commercial sex, regulation was applied in China with varying rules and restrictions.[117] Police regulation faced women who sold sex in numerous countries across the globe, each with local peculiarities and varying legal basis.

In Germany however, particularly from 1871 onwards, there remained a permanent tension between the systems in place at the local level and the laws in place at the national level. Whereas Italian unification was accompanied by a law which cemented the status of regulationism across the country, German unification—more

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[113] Lücke, 'Hierarchien der Unzucht', 49–64.
[114] Gibson, *Prostitution and the State*, 15.
[115] See: Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society*; Howell, *Geographies of Regulation*; Levine, *Prostitution, Race, and Politics*; Legg, *Prostitution and the Ends of Empire*.
[116] Laurie Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters: Prostitutes and Their Regulation in Imperial Russia* (Berkeley, 1995); Corbin, *Women for Hire*; Tracol-Huynh, 'The Shadow Theater', 10–51; Hearne, *Policing Prostitution*; Wingfield, *World of Prostitution*.
[117] Elizabeth Remick, *Regulating Prostitution in China. Gender and Local Statebuilding, 1900-1937* (Stanford, 2014).

specifically, the Imperial Criminal Code—fundamentally questioned the legal foundation of regulation in German towns and cities. Yet, despite the faltering legal justification, police forces across the empire clung to or moderated the local systems of regulated prostitution. A visitor to the German empire noted 'in no two German cities is the same system in vogue. Nor do the differences touch mere matters of detail; they go to the very root of the whole matter'.[118] Whilst some city forces interpreted their authority widely, others directly broke the law. Regulation in the German empire, unlike in Italy or France, remained a curiously local phenomenon despite its wide reach.[119] Even in Britain, where regulation under the CD Acts was implemented locally, it nonetheless rested on a national law.[120] This discrepancy in the local level management of commercial sex would continue into the period under consideration in this work. Decisions taken in the second half of the twentieth century often intertwined with or referred back to previous systems of controlling prostitution in the respective city.

Regulation in the German empire

After German unification in 1871, selling sex across the German empire came under the provisions of the new Imperial Criminal Code. Paragraph 361,6 of the code provided police officers with the power to arrest and subject to a medical exam anyone that they suspected of being a prostitute. This clause would be taken as justification for much police practice in the years to come. Commercial sex was in principle illegal yet tolerated under police supervision. Importantly, however, the Imperial Criminal Code significantly hampered the foundations of local regulation systems. Under the broad category of 'crimes and offences against morality', §180 targeted anyone who provided opportunity for the exercise of prostitution and so countenanced and furthered it, for instance procurers and brothel-keepers. In doing so the code also made police brothels—the foundation of many previous regulation systems—illegal and exposed the police themselves to prosecution.[121] The category of 'crimes against morality', which ranged from bigamy and adultery, to indecent acts with minors, homosexual acts

[118] Abraham Flexner quoted and translated in Roos, *Weimar through the Lens*, 16.
[119] Regulation in the Austro-Hungarian Empire was similarly decentralised: Wingfield, *World of Prostitution*, 8.
[120] Judith Walkowitz and Daniel Walkowitz, '"We Are Not Beasts of the Field": Prostitution and the Poor in Plymouth and Southampton under the Contagious Diseases Acts', *Feminist Studies*, 1973, 3.
[121] Richard Evans, 'Prostitution, State and Society in Imperial Germany', *P&P*, 70, 1976, 110.

between men, bestiality, rape, pimping and procuring, would survive in modified form well into the Federal Republic.[122]

Even within the German empire, policing remained decentralised, and each state had its own police force. Although some towns responded to the new criminal code by closing state-run brothels, others chose to continue their practices, either by concealing police control over the town's brothels or simply by choosing not to prosecute. Local systems differed greatly in the degree of residential freedom permitted of registered prostitutes. In some cases, registration was imposed upon women, in other towns it was voluntary, often there were multiple paths leading to police registration. Hamburg became the only large city in Germany where brothels were both sanctioned and directly supervised by the vice police (in a system known as *Bordellierung*). Its provisions contradicted the criminal code and, as Julia Roos argues, created a particularly repressive iteration of regulation.[123] In most other towns, police confined women who sold sex to living in certain areas or streets—a practice known as *Kasernierung* ('putting them into barracks')—and registered them individually.[124] This was generally accompanied with restrictions on how registered prostitutes could move through the streets, including bans from major thoroughfares or squares.[125] In Cologne, whilst *Kasernierung* was in place, some registered prostitutes were permitted to live outside of the designated streets.[126] Neither *Kasernierung* nor *Bordellierung* was used in Berlin, where, at least in the early twentieth century, registered prostitutes were permitted to choose their own apartments.[127] Accordingly, although regulation was widespread, its impact on women who sold sex varied across time and location.

The continuation of regulation in most German towns and cities, which rested on a wide interpretation of the law by local police forces, indicates the long-running tension between federal law and its local implementation. Regulation, however, by no means included all commercial sex in the city; there was always a contingent of women able to escape registration. All local systems of registered prostitution also contended

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[122] Edward Dickinson, 'Policing Sex in Germany, 1882-1982: A Preliminary Statistical Analysis', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 16/3 (2007), 208–12.
[123] Roos, *Weimar through the Lens*, 63.
[124] Evans, 'Prostitution, State and Society', 111.
[125] Roos, *Weimar through the Lens*, 20.
[126] Evans argues that by the 1890s it was clear that regulation was not effective in controlling commercial sex and identifies a large proportion of 'clandestine' prostitution: Evans, 'Prostitution, State and Society', 118.
[127] Roos, *Weimar through the Lens*, 18.

with so-called 'clandestine' (*heimliche*) prostitution, the term for women who sold sex without registering with the local police forces. In 1913, although Hamburg police counted 1,088 registered women, their arrests of illegal streetwalkers numbered almost three times this figure (3,127).[128] Whilst local police forces often acted contradictory to or outside of the provisions of federal law, at the local level, those involved in a city's sex industry acted both within and outside of police regulation.

Selling sex in the Weimar Republic

Regulation in Germany survived both the First World War and the 1918/1919 revolution, yet came under criticism from numerous groups in the Weimar Republic. Its critics and the criticisms they espoused were varied. One group came from amongst the registered women themselves, as Hamburg and Altona became centres of prostitutes' political activism in the Weimar Republic.[129] The magazine *Der Pranger* (The Pillory) was published by women who sold sex in Hamburg, in cooperation with the Communist party, to expose the abuses of regulationism and brothel life.[130] Mostly the criticisms of the system, and the discussions over how to manage prostitution, took place away from the women who were subjected to regulation, however. Abolitionist movements, left-wing reformers and bourgeois feminists debated and campaigned against a system that persevered despite its shaky legal foundations.

Abolitionist reformers—who campaigned for the abolition of regulation—had some successes in the early 1920s, when cities including Hamburg, Bremen, Leipzig and Dresden began to abolish their licensed brothels and the practice of *Kasernierung.*[131] In 1927 these successes were strengthened when the Law on Combatting Venereal Diseases (GBG) was passed. Primarily a law about VD, the 1927 GBG made medical treatment obligatory for those infected, whilst §4 of the law allowed public health agencies to subject people to compulsory medical tests and treatment.[132] The GBG made it an imprisonable offence to infect another with VD, in

[128] Ibid., 17.
[129] Ibid., 58.
[130] Ibid., 79.
[131] Idem., 'Women's Rights, Nationalist Anxiety, and the "Moral" Agenda in the Early Weimar Republic: Revisiting the "Black Horror" Campaign against France's African Occupation Troops', *CEH*, 42/3 (2009), 504.
[132] It was based, in part, on anti-VD legislation in place in Norway, Denmark, and Sweden. Roos, *Weimar through the Lens*, 2.

line with similar legislation common across Europe in the twentieth century.[133] It also, importantly, transformed legal attitudes to commercial sex, by decriminalising prostitution in towns larger than 15,000 inhabitants, repealing regulationism and outlawing brothels. The law signified a shift from a regulationist model of managing prostitution to a public health-based model, which in practice often proved less absolute than the legal change might suggest.

The Weimar-era GBG conceptualised commercial sex as a public health issue and brought women who sold sex under the responsibility of local health authorities, although the transfer in power from police to the health offices was, as Ulrike Lindner has detailed, not always strictly observed in practice. The law in its wording could be applied to both men and women, yet many of its provisions were, in practice, targeted solely against women.[134] With the GBG allowing for specific measures to be applied to those 'strongly suspected' of having VD, local officials categorised those individuals, typically women, as 'hwG'. Such categorisation subjected 'hwG'-persons to health office registration and regular medical testing.[135] It was applied to women who sold sex, but also to a larger contingent of women deemed promiscuous or morally suspect.

The unclear categorisation of 'hwG'-persons and the blurred boundaries between women and girls deemed at risk of VD and those who engaged in prostitution continued throughout the century and as such will feature as an ongoing concern throughout the following work. The categorisation of a woman as 'hwG', although used widely into the 1980s, often rested on the discretion of individual social and health workers. Some local health offices used the terms 'hwG' and 'prostitute' synonymously, whilst others treated these as separate categories with different requirements. Although my archival research has been in part beholden to the categorisations used by past social workers and health office employees, I aim to highlight and, where possible, tease out this definitional entanglement as it continued throughout the period under consideration.

Nazi Germany

After the Nazi takeover in 1933 it seemed that the new regime would attempt to eradicate commercial sex in its entirety, as tens of thousands of women who sold sex

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[133] Freund-Widder, *Frauen unter Kontrolle*, 82; Lindner, *Gesundheitspolitik*, 297; Dolinsek/Hearne, 'Introduction', 126.
[134] Lindner, *Gesundheitspolitik*, 297.
[135] Timm, *Politics of Fertility*, 171.

were rounded up and sent to workhouses and concentration camps in the same year.[136] The laws regarding prostitution, both §361,6 of the criminal code and the GBG, were tightened in 1933; the law now criminalised those 'who publicly and conspicuously or in a manner *likely* to annoy the public, incite immoral acts or offer immoral services', which meant it was no longer necessary to prove anyone was offended to prosecute solicitation.[137] As Timm, Roos and others have showed however, the treatment of commercial sex in Nazi territory emerged to be far more ambiguous.

Women who sold sex in Nazi Germany were increasingly marginalised and subjected to draconian punishments. Prostitutes were amongst those deemed by the regime as 'asocial', a group defined as

> people whose perpetration of trivial but constantly repeated infringements of the law shows their unwillingness to integrate themselves into a system of order that is intrinsic to a national socialist state.[138]

Definitions of female asocial behaviour included becoming too easily aroused ('*sexuelle Erregbarkeit*') and could result in measures including forced sterilisation. A 1937 Preventive Detention Decree issued in December by the Prussian Interior Ministry called for indefinite protective police custody (*Vorbeugungshaft*) for individuals who endangered society through 'asocial' behaviours—explicitly including prostitution.[139]

Despite the severe consequences faced by women who sold sex, the regime did not look to eradicate commercial sex in its entirety. At the same time as women were being deemed 'asocial', state-regulated prostitution was reinstituted. From the early years, many city administrations took the Nazi crackdown on street-based commercial sex as support for re-institutionalising brothels, although the section of the 1927 GBG which banned brothels and police regulationism had not been officially repealed. In Hamburg, Essen and Lübeck, registered prostitutes were once again confined to brothels and designated districts without a legal basis.[140] Although these cities acted pre-emptively, support for brothels came from the Supreme Command of the *Wehrmacht* (1936) and from Heinrich Himmler (1937). In October 1940 the existing GBG was modified and §17, which had eliminated *Kasernierung*, abolished. With civilian brothels legalised, local authorities were able to designate women either as 'legal' prostitutes or as 'asocial'.[141] The consequences of this distinction were here taken to the

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[136] Ibid., 176.
[137] As translated in ibid., 176.
[138] As translated in ibid., 170–71.
[139] Ibid., 171-172
[140] Ibid., 177.
[141] Ibid., 182.

extremes, yet regulation had always also included the criminalisation of the unregistered.[142]

During the war years, the Nazi sanctioning of brothels became more overt. By 1942, two years after the GBG-modification, the criminal police in Berlin were running 28 civilian brothels. That same year also saw the beginning of brothels in concentration camps, envisioned as a 'productivity' incentive for non-Jewish male inmates.[143] Female inmates, often those interred as 'asocials', were assigned to the camp brothels. In addition, the Nazi regime also implemented brothels for *Wehrmacht* soldiers, as well as for foreign labourers (*Fremdarbeiter*). As Roos has stated, 'especially during wartime, the regulated brothel became a key institution of Nazi sexual policy'.[144]

Post-war prostitution

The German defeat and Allied takeover in 1945 left the status of commercial sex in the immediate post-war period unclear. Nazi policy on prostitution had taken previous tendencies in policies on prostitution to the extremes. The regime had worked with existing laws, but also modified them and passed supplementary laws and regulations. Following German defeat, the law regarding commercial sex lacked definition or certainty, with legislators unsure which laws could still be applied. Often, although not consistently, they reverted to the 1927 GBG.[145]

When Allied forces arrived on the ground, more pressing issues at first took precedence. The physical destruction was immense, bombing campaigns having resulted in severely damaged infrastructure and housing. By May 1945, at least 600,000 living quarters in Berlin had been destroyed. A bombing raid in Hamburg in the summer of 1943 had unleashed an 'uncontrollable firestorm' over the city. By the end of the war, around seventy-five per cent of the built-up area of Hamburg was devastated.[146] The widespread destruction across Germany affected infrastructure, which combined with significant food and fuel shortages and a thriving black market. Moreover, these crises were exacerbated in the following months by a steady flow of refugees and returnees to the cities, all in need of food and housing.

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[142] White, *Comforts of Home*, 5.
[143] Timm, *Politics of Fertility*, 181; Sommer, *Das KZ-Bordell*.
[144] Roos, 'Backlash', 67.
[145] Lindner, *Gesundheitspolitik*, 300.
[146] Jeffry Diefendorf, *In the Wake of War: The Reconstruction of German Cities after World War II* (Oxford, 1993), 7–11.

Prostitution and promiscuity soon became a central concern of Allied forces preoccupied with mitigating the VD epidemic in occupied Germany. In Berlin, the increase in VD rates was visible in 1945/46. Both advancing armies and occupying forces played an important role in these outbreaks. It is estimated, for instance, that one third of women in Berlin, out of a population of around 1.5 million women, were raped by Soviet soldiers, whilst rapes also occurred at the hands of members of the other Allied forces.[147] In the following months and years, concerns over the spread of VD crystallised around fraternisation and prostitution.[148] Refugee women, or those who turned to sexual barter, referred to as *Hungerprostitution*, to feed themselves and their families were seen as particularly suspect. Although the measures taken depended on the zone of occupation—Berlin was soon under four-way control by the Soviets, the Americans, the French and the British, whilst Cologne and Hamburg were both situated in the British zone—a consistent priority, regardless of zone, was the protection of soldiers over civilians. The US Army, for instance, passed strict regulations to protect its soldiers from VD.[149]

In many German towns and cities in the years after the end of the war, surveillance measures were drastically stepped up to curb the spread of VD. A combination of military police, German police and health officials patrolled the streets and bars, targeting women in raids and subjecting them to forced health examinations.[150] They saw the problem of VD morally, blaming women for the spread of disease.[151] In Hamburg, both British and German officials agreed that prostitutes and promiscuous women were the cause of the epidemic and women became the targets of state intervention.[152] Numerous factors could make a woman suspicious and the target of police patrols: being out in the evening, in a bar, being unaccompanied or, conversely, in the company of a soldier, or simply being a refugee.[153] In Cologne, women suspected of relations with British soldiers were subjected to a forced medical inspection and, if evidence of VD was found, a longer quarantine.[154] The venereal

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[147] Atina Grossmann, 'A Question of Silence: The Rape of German Women by Occupation Soldiers', *October*, 72 (1995), 46.
[148] Timm, *Politics of Fertility*, 187.
[149] Steinbacher, *Wie der Sex*, 88.
[150] Timm, *Politics of Fertility*, 195.
[151] Steinbacher, *Wie der Sex*, 88.
[152] Michaela Freund-Widder, 'The Making of Prostitutes: Hamburg's Fight Against Prostitution 1945-1956', in *Sex, State and Society: Comparative Perspectives on the History of Sexuality*, ed. Lars-Göran Tedebrand, 272.
[153] Schießl, 'Von der Duldung', 120.
[154] Lindner, *Gesundheitspolitik*, 303.

disease patrols and vice raids were not confined to the initial post-war years, although in Hamburg they were toned down somewhat from mid-1946.[155] In February 1949, the federal state of Hamburg passed its own 'Law on Combatting Venereal Diseases' to tackle the unclear legal situation.[156] In Berlin, the patrols and raids continued—with close cooperation between police and social workers—until the introduction of a new nation-wide VD law in 1953.[157] In the Soviet zone, and in the early years of the German Democratic Republic, police and welfare workers also carried out razzias of bars or other public places in search of potential spreaders of VD. Here, a 1947 SMAD (Soviet Military Administration in Germany) command (no. 273) distinguished between 'asocial' and therefore guilty VD sufferers and other innocent yet infected people. 'Asocials', they decreed, could be forcibly hospitalised and made to undergo labour education programmes, for instance in a reformatory.[158]

In both East and West, the association of prostitution and VD remained strong, regardless whether this reflected the reality of the spread of infections.[159] More generally, the role of health offices in forced medical examinations in the Western zones represents a significant continuity from the Weimar and Nazi periods, often expressed both in methods and in personnel, carried out with permission of the Allied government.[160] Continuities in personnel made an inheritance of ideas around prostitution unavoidable, with doctors describing 'clandestine' prostitution or 'hwG' women as 'asocials who belong in a facility'.[161]

The early Federal Republic

The foundation of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) in 1949, followed shortly by that of the German Democratic Republic, cemented the division of Germany into two countries, with separate governments and legal frameworks. With Berlin as a city similarly divided, Bonn, was made the new West German capital. West Berlin, although separate, eventually grew to function as a de facto eleventh West German state.[162]

The formation of the FRG was accompanied with the passing of a new constitution, termed the Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*). Basic Law covered both the structure

[155] Freund-Widder, 'The Making of Prostitutes', 275.
[156] Freund-Widder, *Frauen unter Kontrolle*, 210.
[157] Timm, *Politics of Fertility*, 214.
[158] Brüning, *Prostitution in der DDR*, 49–50.
[159] See statistics cited in: Brüning, *Prostitution in der DDR*, 52.
[160] Steinbacher, *Wie der Sex*, 92.
[161] Ibid., 87.
[162] This number refers to after the 1957 incorporation of the Saarland into the FRG.

of the FRG and numerous protections of individual freedoms, including personal freedoms (Article 2), equal rights for men and women (Article 3), and the inviolability of the home (Article 13). These constitutional rights would be significant in the continued policing of commercial sex. Basic Law also regulated the division of responsibilities between the national and federal (*Länder*) levels, delegating numerous spheres, including health and education, to the state level and thus allowing for deviation across the FRG. In the first free elections in 1949 the conservative CDU/CSU outnumbered the SPD with approximately 2% of the vote and formed a centre-right coalition with former mayor of Cologne Konrad Adenauer as the first chancellor of the FRG.

The existence of a new West German state did little to regulate the mess of laws on commercial sex and VD, employed with varying treatment and intensity across the federal states. Reform was seen as urgently necessary by doctors and health offices, yet how this reform should look was a subject of much debate. Discussions surrounding *Kasernierung* and the police regulation of prostitution were again revisited. The potential health threat caused by the spectre of masses of vagrant 'hwG' women and girls was used by many to argue for a system of forced incarceration (*Bewahrung*) of youth with VD.[163]

After a long debate in the federal parliament (*Bundestag*), by which point the post-war VD epidemic had largely subsided, a new Law on Combatting Venereal Diseases (GBG) was passed in July 1953. It was based closely on its 1927 predecessor, and similarly did not directly mention prostitution, referring instead to those 'strongly suspected' to have or spread a VD. In practice, health offices would again use §4 to enact surveillance of women they deemed to be prostitutes and register persons deemed 'hwG'.[164] Significantly, the 1933 modification of §361,6 which made it easier to convict was retained in the 1953 law.

By this point, the post-war VD epidemic had been contained and the legal uncertainties largely, although not entirely, smoothed over. Along with it, the secondary literature on the policing of venereal disease and prostitution largely ends, for the policing of VD seemed to become a marginal topic. Nevertheless, developments in the 1950s created the preconditions for the following years and, as such, form the basis of the remainder of this chapter.

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[163] Lindner, *Gesundheitspolitik*, 316-318
[164] Ibid., 336.

Health offices in the 1950s

The passage of the 1953 GBG meant that women who sold sex in West Germany were, once again, seen as a public health issue and required to register at health office 'counselling centres' (*Beratungsstellen*). These counselling centres were mandated by the GBG and, although they were ostensibly intended to educate the populace on venereal disease, they were rarely visited by those not under its surveillance programmes.[165] Most individuals looking for VD treatments turned directly to treatment by a doctor, and the clinics concentrated on controlling prostitution.

Health office counselling centres were central to the management of commercial sex at the local level, although the provisions again varied between cities and federal states. Many developed prostitute indexes, including the addresses and phone numbers of registered women. Registration at the health office could take place voluntarily or be imposed after interactions with the police. Doctors were also tasked with reporting individuals likely to pass on the disease, a measure targeted at 'promiscuous' women or women they deemed to be prostitutes.[166] Women who sold sex and 'hwG'-persons were required, under the provisions of the GBG, to regularly attend the counselling centres for examinations. In Cologne in 1955, the 260 registered prostitutes were instructed to attend free VD checks at the centre twice-weekly. In some federal states, women who sold sex were permitted to be examined instead by a private doctor. Cologne did not offer this option to those categorised as prostitutes, yet, in the early 1950s, some women deemed 'hwG' were given the dispensation to turn to a private doctor for their health check—at their own costs.[167] If they were found to have VD, registered women were typically treated at a local hospital.

In Berlin in 1953, there were four district counselling centres, located in Kreuzberg, Wedding, Schöneberg and Steglitz.[168] The Wedding centre became the central clinic for 'hwG' women caught on police or health office patrol, but all four institutions were also used for regular appointments.[169] In Hamburg the health office set up a separate centre explicitly for prostitutes (*Zentrale Beratungsstelle für Prostituierte,*

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[165] The clinics had been an important part of the functioning of the GBG during Weimar, in the Nazi period they had developed into clearer instruments of control or had been closed entirely. Lindner, *Gesundheitspolitik*, 320.

[166] Ibid., 334-336.

[167] Ibid., 338; *Gesundheitsamt* to *Senator für Finanzen* Berlin, 13.10.1952, Acc-646-A16, HAStK.

[168] 'Reorganisation der Beratungsstellen', 1953, B-Rep-002-41327, LAB.

[169] 'Begründung Personalausstattung', B-Rep-004-529, LAB, 124.

ZB for short). The Cologne health office had, in addition to its central *Beratungsstelle*, an evaluation centre (*Sichtungsstelle*) where all women and girls brought by the police on suspicion of having VD were kept, sometimes for multiple days, for inspection and examination.[170] Often such clinics had significant continuities in personnel with the Nazi period, as was certainly the case in Hamburg.[171]

Most health offices organised patrols through the streets and bars of the city, or to registered addresses, in search of women who did not attend their appointments. Mostly, women and girls found on patrol were taken to the clinic first for an interrogation. Sometimes this would result in welfare measures (including reformatory admission). Often, they were taken to a closed hospital ward without a prior VD check. The GBG allowed for forced medical treatment, specifically suspending the rights in Basic Law regarding the physical integrity and freedom of the person (Article 2). In Berlin, a closed ward was set up in the dermatology clinic of the Free University precisely for those who refused examination or treatment.[172] The experience of such closed wards varied greatly, yet examples of patients escaping, or attempting to do so, indicate that this was rarely a pleasant stay.[173]

Police departments in the 1950s

Although the GBG placed commercial sex as health problem and thus under the jurisdiction of the health offices, local police departments across West Germany retained a significant level of involvement in the lives of women who sold sex. Local police forces were divided into protective police (*Schutzpolizei*, or *Schupo* for short) and criminal police (*Kriminalpolizei*, or *Kripo*) departments, with separate jurisdictions. *Kripo* officers primarily undertook investigative, plainclothes work, whilst *Schupo* officers were involved in policing a range of misdemeanours and offences in the city. Officers of both the *Schupo* and the *Kripo* were involved in the local management of commercial sex and often co-operated by sharing information. Local *Kripo* departments typically also included a *Sittenpolizei* or 'vice police' division, which continued to police women who sold sex. The 'Sitte' had traditionally been responsible for the implementation of regulation; in post-war Germany their tasks included the monitoring and policing of commercial sex, procurement, pimping, and other sexual crimes,

[170] Lindner, *Gesundheitspolitik*, 304.
[171] Freund-Widder, *Frauen unter Kontrolle*, 190.
[172] Lindner, *Gesundheitspolitik*, 337-338.
[173] Individual cases: 352-6-5400, StHH.

including men who had sex with men, pornography and incest. The categorisation of prostitution as a concern of the vice police, themselves a division of the criminal police, is striking, especially considering that the sale of sex remained legal in this period. Evidently, the association of prostitution with crime by police officers and West German administrators remained resistant to change.

Both *Schupo* and *Kripo* officers continued to interact with and police women who sold sex in numerous ways. During the 1950s, police officers (typically *Schupo*) accompanied health office workers on their patrols in search of 'hwG' women who avoided registration or missed appointments. Throughout the decade, West Berlin officers took part in health office patrols in the city. Some forces also had a WKP department (*Weibliche Kriminalpolizei*) which was exclusively made up of female officers. They were deemed to be well-suited to focus on crimes involving women and youth, as both perpetrators and victims.[174] Officers of these departments patrolled bars in search of underage or missing girls who, it was felt, were at risk of turning to prostitution.

The discretion of individual police officers, or of those small groups on patrol, could significantly determine the impact of policing on women who sold sex. This was particularly the case when police officers across West Germany made use of §361,6 of the criminal code to arrest women deemed to be soliciting in a 'conspicuous' manner in the street or in the vicinity of churches or schools. Arrests on this basis could have far-reaching consequences for the women targeted. For some, it meant fines or imprisonment, which often rested on an outside judgement of the conspicuousness of their behaviour. For Irma K.*, arrested in West Berlin's Tiergarten district in 1959, soliciting in the vicinity of a church and a school whilst homeless led both to her imprisonment and later confinement in a workhouse for two years.[175]

Whilst the criminal code did cover limited forms of illegal solicitation, it did not outlaw solicitation or prostitution outright and courts often refused to convict on the basis of §361,6.[176] This refusal could rest on a lack of evidence—often solicitation cases were one word against another—or on a difference of interpretations of the term

[174] Jörg-Michael Klös and Friedrich Sander, 'Die weibliche Kriminalpolizei', in *Berliner Kriminalpolizei von 1945 bis zur Gegenwart* (Berlin, 2005), 81.
[175] I use * to indicate pseudonyms. Tiergarten *Amtsgericht* Judgement, 09.09.1959, B-Rep-065-543, LAB.
[176] *Polizeipräsident* to *Bundesbahndirektion Köln,* 19.03.1956, BR-0051-563, LAV NRW.

‘conspicuous’ (*auffällig*).[177] A 1958 Federal Court of Justice judgement found that street prostitution itself did not suffice as conspicuous, rather, the behaviour of the woman selling sex needed to be unusual, such as by wearing conspicuous clothing.[178]

Although earlier regulated systems which had restricted women selling sex into registered brothels under the control and supervision of the local vice police were no longer in effect, they had left a legacy of former brothel streets in the centres of many West German towns and cities. At the local level, many cities established systems resembling traditional regulation, under the purview of the vice police. Registered women often lived in houses previously referred to as brothels, but now police forces and local authorities across the Federal Republic instead used terms such as ‘prostitute residence’ (*Dirnenwohnheim*). The ‘prostitute residences’ were ostensibly different from brothels or brothel-like establishments due to a supposed absence of coercion by or undue profit for the house owners and managers. Police restrictions on ‘prostitute residences’ dealt with the sale of alcohol, the rental costs, the inclusion of a ‘salon’ room in which clients could meet and choose between women, or the appearance of these houses to the street, for instance banning women showing themselves at the window.[179] Renting rooms to prostitutes without exploitation, recruitment into or encouragement of prostitution, was not seen sufficient to merit a procurement prosecution and merely renting rooms to multiple women who sold sex, such as in ‘prostitute residences’, according to a 1955 Federal Court of Justice judgement, was not criminal.[180] The differentiation between brothel and ‘prostitute residence’ was, in practice, an arbitrary one, used by police and city administrations to circumvent the restrictions on brothels. The specificities of these local systems of regulation were, if not directly contrary to federal law, often decidedly different to the vision of the 1953 GBG.

Tensions with federal law: the early *Sperrbezirke*

As well as relying on the existing laws on commercial sex and venereal disease, however, city authorities and police departments across the Federal Republic looked over the course of the 1950s to enhance police power to remove women selling sex from the streets. Many enacted early *Sperrbezirke*, restricted areas in which the sale of

[177] ‘Eingabe des Fremdenverkehrsvereins’, *Oberregierungsrat* to *Rechtsamt,* 14.03.1953, 131-1-II-668, StHH.
[178] ‘Stellungnahme zu zwei Beschlüssen’, 22.03.1968, 331-1II-760, StHH.
[179] ‘Auswüchse der Prostitution’, BR-0051-564, LAV NRW.
[180] ‘Drucksache für Senatssitzung 238’, 28.04.1965, 131-1-II-668, StHH.

sex, whether conspicuous or not, was forbidden, on the basis of local police or magistrate ordinances.[181] These worked similar to *Kasernierung*, yet, rather than designating permitted spaces for the sale of sex, instead looked to ban commercial sex from certain areas of the city. To combat a situation where federal law placed only limited restrictions on selling sex in public space, local administrations or police departments used police or magistrate ordinances to restrict the public presence of women who sold sex.

In Hamburg and West Berlin—the two cities with the largest population of women selling sex—discussion of such a restricted area remained limited during the 1950s. Hamburg's police senator argued decisively against these measures in 1953. He pointed to their potential illegality, but also placed doubt upon their effectiveness in curbing commercial sex in public view. Rather, he predicted that a regulation of this kind would at most displace women selling sex into surrounding areas and, in any case, any change would require the courts to 'go along with it'.[182]

Whilst some members of Cologne's police department also expressed doubts about the effectiveness of such a measure, the city's public order office (*Amt für öffentliche Ordnung*) was keen to follow the lead of neighbouring Düsseldorf which had, they noted, passed a *Sperrbezirk* ordinance in 1953 banning women from certain streets and squares between 7pm and 7am for the purposes of selling sex.[183] Under pressure from the public order office, Cologne police passed a similar measure in 1956—its 'Ordinance on Combating Prostitution on and along Certain Streets in the Cologne Urban Area'—to designate part of the city centre a restricted area and to banish women selling sex.[184]

Despite initial doubts about the new ordinance, it was implemented intensively by police officers in Cologne. Women caught selling sex on the streets were repeatedly arrested, brought to the police station and often the health office, charged with fines, or interned. When arrested in the *Sperrbezirk*, they reacted in numerous ways—admitting

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[181] 'Bayerische Verordnung über das Verbot der Gewerbsunzucht', 23.11.1956; 'Baden-württembergische Verordnung zur Bekämpfung der gewerbsmässigen Unzucht', 18.12.1952; 'Hessische Verordnung über das Verbot der Ausübung der Unzucht zum Erwerb', 07.12.1954, all 131-1-II-668, StHH.

[182] *Oberregierungsrat* to *Rechtsamt,* 'Eingabe des Fremdenverkehrsvereins', 14.03.1953; *Oberregierungsrat* to *Rechtsamt,* 'Eingabe des Fremdenverkehrsvereins', 02.04.1953, both 131-1-II-668, StHH.

[183] '9K Vermerk', 13.04.1956, BR-0051-563, LAV NRW.

[184] Acc-734-A68, HAStK, 21.

or denying selling sex, employing physical resistance to arrest, or avoiding later appointments.[185]

Yet the ordinance did not last. As the Hamburg senator had predicted, over the course of the 1950s such local ordinances and regulations were repeatedly found unlawful and, by the end of 1957, the Federal Supreme Court had judged current federal legislation as sufficient. The court's decision found local *Sperrbezirke* designed to banish commercial sex from the cityscape, such as Cologne's 1956 regulation, unlawful.[186] Officers on patrol through city streets were once again limited to arrests on the basis of conspicuous solicitation, proximity to churches or schools, or simply bringing the women they encountered to the health office.

Commercial sex at the turn of the decade

The long history of regulation in Germany, which reached back to before unification but resurfaced in the German empire, the Weimar Republic and in Nazi Germany, continued to play a decisive role going into the 1960s. It influenced both how the sex industry was dispersed in the post-war cityscape and how members of local authorities, such as health, welfare, or police departments, looked to control it. The widespread toleration of 'prostitute residences', for all intents and purposes simply brothels with a different name, indicates how regulationist tendencies survived at the local level, even when the law precluded it. The determination with which Hamburg's authorities, in particular its police, had clung to its system of police brothels, illustrates the pervasiveness of regulation in parts of Germany. Attempts to have a national stance on commercial sex had, from the very beginning, been challenged both by the federal system and by city authorities.

At the same time, however, new methods and measures of controlling commercial sex in the city were being developed to adapt to new legal and social frameworks. These tendencies emerged in the 1950s, evidenced by local *Sperrbezirk* ordinances. Whilst the early *Sperrbezirke* did not last, these attempts suggest that city authorities interpreted commercial sex as a problem of public order in city space. Once again, they indicated a willingness to go around the prohibitions of federal law. These tendencies would be exacerbated in the following years.

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[185] See cases in Acc-194-A57 and Acc-194-A59, HAStK.

[186] Düsseldorf's *Sperrbezirk*, based on a police ordinance, was declared invalid by the senate of the higher district course in 1953. It declared existing restrictions on selling sex in the vicinity of churches or schools, or in a conspicuous manner, as definitive: 'Gründe', 19.11.1953, BR-0051-563, LAV NRW.

By the turn of the decade, concerns surrounding commercial sex, and the women who practiced it, were removed from the urgencies of post-war chaos and venereal disease epidemic. Distance from both the previous regime and the years of upheaval meant that the context and priorities of managing women who sold sex were shifting. Access to penicillin as quick and effective treatment for both syphilis and gonorrhoea, the two most common venereal diseases, changed the impact and understandings of VD considerably.[187] The GBG still viewed prostitution as a health issue, yet in practice, commercial sex was variously interpreted also as an issue of labour, crime, and public order. Despite unifying tendencies, such as the health office registration and regular health examinations, the experiences of women who sold sex were always also decidedly determined by local context. The many ways in which commercial sex was problematised or understood as an issue of public health, labour, crime, or public order in Hamburg, Cologne, and West Berlin during the long 1960s and 1970s will form the focus of the remaining work.

[187] Lindner, *Gesundheitspolitik*, 290.

2. Health

> Every registered prostitute looks after her health![188]

In 1968, a letter reached Hamburg's health senator Hans-Joachim Seeler, signed by almost 90 women who sold sex in the city. Its signatories complained about the state of the counselling centre where they were required to attend regular examinations for venereal disease (VD). Perhaps more significantly, however, they rejected the burden placed on their shoulders for stopping the spread of VD. They argued that while prostitutes looked after their health, the same could not be said for the rest of Hamburg's citizens. Provocatively the letter asked, 'do you have so many asylums to house those who need sleep?'.[189]

Fifteen years after the passage of the Law on Combatting Venereal Diseases (GBG) in 1953, and 41 years after the first GBG was enacted in Weimar Germany, women who sold sex or those deemed to be 'hwG'-persons were still required to register with their local health offices and attend regular, typically fortnightly, VD examinations. The 1953 GBG had reaffirmed prostitution and promiscuity as a public health problem to be tackled by local health offices. It required health offices to set up nebulously entitled *Beratungsstellen* or counselling centres to both educate the general populace on VD and to monitor those 'strongly suspected' to have or spread VD: prostitutes or 'hwG'-persons. Although the law itself was gender-neutral, its implementation was specifically gendered; the system of surveillance, including forced registration and forced measures, was applied overwhelmingly to women.[190]

The letter was written at a time when West Germans were beginning to openly address Nazi legacies, real or presumed, including in the medical profession. A new cohort of younger doctors who had not had their formative medical training and experiences under the Nazi period were gaining influence and, from the mid- to late 1960s, patient groups proved more willing to articulate their grievances with the West German medical profession.[191] In many ways, the West German health system proved resistant to change. It retained its strong separation between preventative and curative medicines; the health office counselling centres remained part of the preventative

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[188] Anita S. to Seeler, 352-6-1221, StHH.
[189] Ibid.
[190] Other measures detailed in the GBG—such as the punishments for infecting others with VD—were handled separately and applied to all.
[191] Lindner, *Gesundheitspolitik*, 519.

branch, not permitted to treat any infections they diagnosed.[192] Despite first reckonings with the Nazi legacy in the medical sphere, certain repressive aspects of the system held on with remarkable tenacity. In the 1968 letter, registered women from Hamburg used Nazi parallels to give strength to their argument, writing

> We would like to ask you, because you are so in favour of health, not to aryannise the nurses, doctors and perhaps us inferior creatures. Take care of more important things![193]

The category of 'hwG'-persons continued to be used widely by medical and welfare workers across West Germany into the mid-1980s.[194] They used the shorthand 'hwG' to categorise women deemed at high risk of spreading venereal diseases and to decide who was to be subject to health office surveillance. It was an imprecise term, for it was used varyingly and blurred boundaries between women and girls deemed promiscuous and women who engaged in prostitution.[195] Importantly, its categorisation often rested on the discretion of individual social and health workers or varied locally. Whilst some health offices saw the terms 'hwG' and prostitute as synonymous, Hamburg's health office categorised prostitutes and 'hwG'-women separately . In West Berlin, counselling centres distinguished between 'hwG'-persons and suspected 'hwG'-persons.[196] Although primarily used to refer to women who sold sex, it was certainly also applied to women who did not view themselves as prostitutes, but who were seen by welfare workers to transgress the boundaries of acceptable womanhood, particularly those deemed wayward, vagrant or promiscuous. Its continued use throughout the period in question therefore also speaks to the persistence of gender roles and the primacy of the bourgeois family in West Germany. Where possible in the following examination, I state when health office staff differentiated between 'prostitutes' and 'hwG-persons'. When this cannot be determined, I defer to the term used in the sources.

Regulationist systems, which often included VD testing or health surveillance as a central element, have built the focus of much of the existing historiography on prostitution. Typically, health registration records have been used as the most illuminating source base on transactional sex and its participants, providing insights into the lives and backgrounds of women who sold sex in the eighteenth, nineteenth and

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[192] Ibid., 511. For a longer background, see: Sauerteig, *Krankheit, Sexualität, Gesellschaft*, 175–77.

[193] Anita S. to Seeler, 352-6-1221, StHH.

[194] See: Acc-1647-A12, HAStK. 'HwG' was also used in East Germany: Brüning, *Prostitution in der DDR*. On the term's earlier usage: Freund-Widder, *Frauen unter Kontrolle*, 16.

[195] GDR usage of 'hwG' was similarly imprecise: Brüning, *Prostitution in der DDR*, 57–59.

[196] See: B-Rep-004-529, LAB. On the use of 'wG' (changing partners) in Berlin: Walter Grimm, *Neue Formen der Prostitution im Hinblick auf die Nichterfassung durch das Geschlechtskrankengesetz* (Hamburg, 1962), 12.

early twentieth centuries.[197] During the 1960s and 1970s, however, West Germany appears unique in having this system in place, which rested on the regular, organised surveillance of those engaged in commercial sex. Somewhat surprisingly given this level of surveillance, the system in force in this period has proven difficult to reconstruct. Its integration in the wider campaign against venereal disease, as well as its varied implementation at the city level, means that sources have often not been preserved in the same manner, their significance for the history of commercial sex is not immediately obvious. The unevenness of remaining records and the difficulties in reconstructing local peculiarities illustrates on the one hand the striking locality of the systems that developed. It also suggests that, with VD numbers remaining comparably low, this system functioned largely outside of the public eye, a subject of local bureaucracy rather than political action.[198]

Health office surveillance in the three cities

Despite prevailing similarities across West Germany in the registration of 'hwG'-women and prostitutes, the particularities of its implementation were developed locally. In most smaller towns and cities, the local health office had one *Beratungsstelle*, which also served other city residents who suspected infection. Larger cities, by contrast, often developed specific solutions to monitor registered women separately from the general population. This chapter explores the solutions in place in Hamburg, Cologne and West Berlin. By its nature, it cannot provide an all-encompassing account of the changing implementation of the GBG; measures detailed in the following did, on occasion, change. The following assertions are intended, however, to provide an overview of the similarities and differences between the three cities and to assess the impact of the GBG on women who sold sex in West Germany more generally.

In many West German towns, women who registered as prostitutes or as 'hwG'-persons attended the same local counselling centres that managed general VD care in the city. In practice, however, general patients tended to turn straight to doctors for treatment. Consequently, the counselling centres became largely redundant for general VD care, and they instead focussed primarily on the surveillance of 'hwG'-persons.[199]

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[197] Corbin, *Women for Hire*; Levine, *Prostitution, Race, and Politics*; Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society*.

[198] From the mid-1950s, discussions of how to handle VD also went quiet in medical journals: Lindner, *Gesundheitspolitik*, 330.

[199] Ibid., 340-344.

In early 1960, West Berlin had seven of these counselling centres, responsible for its twelve districts. The number of clinics fluctuated over the period as district centres merged, primarily in reaction to funding shortages. By the late 1970s, the city had only four.[200] The counselling centres were responsible for both general VD care and the monitoring of prostitutes and 'hwG'-persons. Registered women were required to attend fortnightly appointments, at which they would be examined for VD. Each of these centres also carried out patrols (including at night) to locate those who missed appointments. From the early 1960s, the Wedding central clinic (*Zentrale Zuführungsstelle*, or ZZ) offered day and night opening hours to accept women apprehended outside of regular working hours.[201] Registered women could choose to receive appointment cards, with stamps and details of their regular attendance at the clinic, to prove to police or welfare workers that they fulfilled the requirements of their registration.[202] From around the mid-1970s, these cards were colloquially referred to by registered women across West Germany as '*Bockscheine*'.[203] Although in West Berlin the *Bockscheine* were voluntary, in practice they were a necessity for women who sold sex on the street, to avoid being repeatedly picked up by the authorities.

In Cologne, 'hwG'-women were registered at the central *Beratungsstelle* and, similarly to West Berlin, were required to attend fortnightly appointments. Between 1946 and 1969, however, Cologne also had a separate evaluation centre (*Sichtungsstelle*), for women and girls found on patrol and suspected to have and be spreading VD.[204] *Sichtungsstelle* staff were tasked with both evaluating patients for VD (to provide VD testing and organise treatment), but also to judge whether the patient could be returned to her family, whether she needed a job, or whether she should be admitted to a reformatory.[205] The *Sichtungsstelle* illustrates clearly the wider links between VD care and the interventionist welfare system. In November 1964 it was transferred to a newbuild in Cologne's Lungengasse in the central Neumarkt area, a

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[200] *Bezirksamt* Wedding to *Senator Gesundheitswesen*, 12.02.1960, B-Rep-004-529, LAB; 'Zum Arzt mit denen, die an der Ecke stehen', *Tagesspiegel*, 19.03.1978.
[201] 'Organisation der Ge-Fürsorge in Berlin', 08.03.1961, 352-6-4688, StHH.
[202] Ibid.
[203] The genesis of the term is unclear but has been linked to the gynaecological chair used for the exams (Bock) or the verb 'to buck' ('*bocken*'): 'Bockschein', *DWDS - Digitales Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache* <https://www.dwds.de/wb/Bockschein> [accessed 21.03.2022]; 'Kein Bock auf Bockschein', *taz*, 03.06.1989, 2.
[204] *Gesundheitsamt* to *Senator für Finanzen* Berlin, 13.10.1952, Acc-646-A16, HAStK.
[205] Voss, 'Die heimliche Prostitution als G.K.-Infektionsquelle', 1963, Acc-672-A13, HAStK.

move which included a downsizing of bed capacity.[206] There were sixteen beds at the new evaluation centre, as opposed to 40 available beds in 1954, where those picked up outside the counselling centre's opening hours were brought to await treatment or to sleep off intoxication.[207]

In Hamburg, the separation between women who sold sex and other VD patients was at its most distinct. The Central Counselling Centre for Prostitutes (*Zentrale Beratungsstelle für Prostituierte,* ZB) coordinated the public health measures targeted directly at women who sold sex separately from general VD care. Women identified as prostitutes were required to attend regular, usually twice-weekly, examinations. Those who missed appointments would be forcibly picked-up by police or welfare workers. Over the period under consideration, the majority of registered women sold sex outside of the 'prostitute residences' **[see T.1.]**. In 1973, Hamburg's ZB managed a highpoint of around 2,300 'free-living' prostitutes, but by 1977 this number had sunk to around 1,600.[208] The ZB was located in Hamburg-Altona, on Allee 176.[209] It was thus only a 20 minute walk from Hamburg's Herbertstraße, but was significantly further for women who worked or lived in the St. Georg district.

Attendance and examinations

When registered women attended their appointments in any of the three cities, they typically underwent gynaecological examinations or blood tests. Although four venereal diseases were listed in the GBG itself—syphilis, gonorrhoea, chancroid and venereal lymphogranuloma —health staff primarily looked only for evidence of the first two. Tests for infections not directly mentioned in the law—such as herpes, hepatitis, or chlamydia—were seldom carried out.[210]

Regular VD examinations were a central element of registration, yet descriptions of this everyday clinic work are rare. Staff shortages in each of the three cities suggest that little time was taken per patient, whilst reports from across West Germany

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[206] BR-009-13688, LAV NRW, 12.

[207] 'Feriengrüße an die Kölner Sittenpolizei', *K-StA*, 17.09.1968, 17; BR-009-12850, LAV NRW, 106.

[208] 'Entwurf einer Senatsdrucksache, Veränderung der Aufgabenstellung der ZB', 352-6-4687, StHH.

[209] Freund-Widder, *Frauen unter Kontrolle*, 128.

[210] From the mid-1980s onwards, some health offices began testing for HIV: Alfons Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik: Prostituiertenbetreuung als pädagogischer Auftrag des Gesetzgebers an die Gesundheitsämter* (Frankfurt/Main, 1993), 144.

described the regular medical exams as mass screenings.[211] When interviewed in the late 1980s, numerous registered women recalled procedures at three anonymised health offices, where patients were made to strip down to their underwear in front of everyone in a room and wait until they were called in individually for examination.[212]

Individual staff members and doctors impacted how 'hwG'-women experienced these examinations. In interviews, women from across West Germany recounted staff abuses of power or sub-standard medical care. In 1988, a registered woman recalled a doctor who arbitrarily handed out gonorrhoea diagnoses:

> He was not exactly squeamish with his examination instruments. He drilled around inside you as if he were looking for oil. If you told him nicely that it hurts, he said, don't act like that, what else do you do all day? If you were grumpy, then you became the gonorrhoea candidate.[213]

Another interviewee described a separate health office:

> They don't use gloves, and they don't give you the little cotton pads to keep your labia apart. He [the doctor] goes at it with his bare paws and rummages around so that you bleed afterwards. He doesn't look at your face, only between your legs.[214]

Such recollections do not feature in the records on Hamburg, Cologne, and West Berlin. Nevertheless, the widespread reluctance or avoidance of health office registration and the appointments suggests women who sold sex associated registration with negative experiences.

Non-attendance was a particular problem in Hamburg throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Records from around 1961 found that of the ca. 1300-1400 registered prostitutes, only ca. 180 consistently attended their appointments.[215] Around 1967, records placed attendance at ca. 20%.[216] Figures from Spring 1977 found that only 29.9% of the required examinations were carried out, notes indicate this was usual for the ZB. Although twice-weekly examinations were intended and required, registered prostitutes were attending on average 0.6/week. Staff put this down to lenience, but also to considerable passive and active resistance by registered prostitutes, which I turn to later in the chapter.[217]

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[211] Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 166. In Munich 1978, examinations reportedly took 5-10 minutes: Ingeborg Münzing, 'Dirnen-Sprechstunde Bei Doktor Ehemann', *Abendzeitung München*, 16.02.1978.
[212] Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 247.
[213] Ibid., 134–35.
[214] Ibid., 134.
[215] 'Zuführungsdienst', Holtschmidt, 13.02.1961, 352-6-1221, StHH.
[216] 'Antrag auf Schaffung einer 4. Stelle', 07.11.1967, 352-6-1221, StHH.
[217] 'Entwurf einer Senatsdrucksache, Veränderung der Aufgabenstellung der ZB', 352-6-4687, StHH.

Although the scale of the problem was (perhaps) unusual at Hamburg's ZB, other counselling centres also suffered attendance problems, primarily from women who did not live in traditional brothel streets and thus proved difficult to track down.[218] In West Berlin for instance, prior to the closure of the border to East Berlin in 1961, staff deemed border-crossing prostitutes a central concern. East German women could easily evade repercussions for non-attendance by returning to the GDR.[219] Their fear of harsh measures in East Germany often meant that they avoided contact with West Berlin authorities altogether. Dr Grimm, of the Berlin-Wedding health office, found the strong fluctuation of women who sold sex to be a particular problem.[220]

In fact, mobility could stretch across West Germany. In 1962, Grimm detailed a case of one woman who had avoided health office appointments for half a year. In that time, she had sold sex in Hamburg, Bremen, and Cologne. She was only found by health office staff when she returned of her own accord.[221] Throughout the period and throughout Germany, mobility evidently proved a central strategy for women who sold sex to avoid regular VD examinations.[222]

Patrols

For 'hwG'-women who attended their appointments regularly, their interactions with the health office could largely be restricted to the regular VD examinations. However, despite systems of monitoring and registration, a significant cohort of women across West Germany sold sex without registering at their local health office. This cohort, alongside those who did not adhere to the requirements of registration, became the focus of patrols and search lists.

If a registered woman did not attend the appointments as required, local health offices could put out an alert for her (*zur Fahndung ausschreiben*) in the hopes that she would be located as part of regular patrols of city streets and bars by social workers or police officers—also designed to find as yet unregistered 'hwG'-women—or through designated house checks. These patrols were a central tool in compelling women to comply with health office measures yet varied in practice as local authorities interpreted

[218] Voss, 'Die heimliche Prostitution', Acc-672-A13, HAStK.
[219] Brüning, *Prostitution in der DDR*, 92.
[220] Walter Grimm, 'Zum gegenwärtigen Stand der Prostitution in West-Berlin', *Soziale Arbeit*, 9 (1960), 5.
[221] Grimm, *Neue Formen der Prostitution*, 25.
[222] This strategy is found frequently in histories of commercial sex, e.g., Wingfield, *World of Prostitution*, 6.

the GBG differently. The GBG had placed the responsibility for prostitution control in the hands of the health offices, restricting police involvement to a supporting role (*Amtshilfe*). It also required health office staff-patient confidentiality, which could restrict cooperation with the police and other authorities if these provisions were followed.[223] The implementation of GBG patrols— particularly the level of direct police cooperation—was challenged locally over the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s.[224]

The disputed balance of responsibilities was most clear in West Berlin. In the 1950s, police officers had supported or carried out patrols of bars and streets with the precise purpose of finding 'hwG'-women who had missed appointments. Often, women found had been kept overnight in a police cell. The following morning, they were photographed, had their fingerprints taken and were entered into the police prostitute register, before finally being brought to the local counselling centre.[225] Kitty, who sold sex on the streets of West Berlin recalled:

> It used to be so bad that you weren't allowed to stand on the street at all. As soon as you were out there, the cops took you to the police station, held you for four hours, and if you didn't manage to get into the bar […] fast enough and were still outside with one heel, then they had your ass again, then you were already back at the police station! So they really bullied us, that's how bad it was back then.[226]

In 1960, Grimm assessed that, despite the different aims and perspectives of health and police departments, their cooperation in Berlin in the fight against VD was 'extremely successful'.[227]

Despite Grimm's satisfaction with the status quo, in November of 1959 West Berlin's police authorities drastically curbed the support provided by police in the search for 'hwG'-women. *Kripo* officers would no longer accompany health office patrols, *Schupo* officers would no longer carry out independent street controls, and 'hwG'-women would no longer be kept overnight in police cells. West Berlin became the first city to remove prostitutes from the patrol book.[228] This change in police practice was significant; in January 1960 local police officers brought only 22 'hwG'-women to the health office, as opposed to 119 the previous January.[229]

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[223] Grimm, 'Zum gegenwärtigen Stand', 3.
[224] The East German 1961 *Verordnung zur Verhütung und Bekämpfung der Geschlechtskrankheiten* similarly restricted police involvement to *Amtshilfe*: Brüning, *Prostitution in der DDR*, 60.
[225] *Bezirksamt* Wedding to *Senator Gesundheitswesen*, 12.02.1960, B-Rep-004-529, LAB.
[226] Pieke Biermann, *"Wir sind Frauen wie andere auch!" Prostituierte und ihre Kämpfe* (Reinbek, 1980), 124.
[227] Grimm, 'Zum gegenwärtigen Stand', 4.
[228] Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 163.
[229] *Bezirksamt* Wedding to *Senator Gesundheitswesen*, 12.02.1960, B-Rep-004-529, LAB

The change in police procedure had not been announced to the health office in advance. Caught unawares, the West Berlin health office was forced to pivot to 'observational patrols' only; without the protection from police officers, the—primarily female—welfare workers would have been required to forcibly remove women by foot and bring them to the next station, a prospect they deemed 'practically unenforceable'.[230] Additionally, *Schupo* officers had been instructed only to ask for a prostitute's *Bockschein* if she was implicated in a separate offence, a significant turn in the policing of street prostitution.[231] Counselling centre staff saw an almost immediate effect on attendance numbers, as registered women reacted to the reduced consequences for missing appointments.[232]

A December 1959 letter from Berlin's health senator to the police chief reveals the bad blood between health office and police in the aftermath of this announcement. He attributed the 'sudden change' with a 'detrimental effect on the fight against venereal diseases', 'especially the health surveillance of prostitution'.[233] In direct response to the police refusal to keep women in jail cells overnight, the West Berlin health office introduced a night shift at the Wedding centre (ZZ) to allow for the immediate examination of those women caught on patrol, which soon became a regular feature.[234]

In the aftermath of this dramatic turn, West Berlin's police and health office developed new forms of cooperation. Police involvement was restricted to cases in which they had separate police dealings with women who sold sex, such as when investigating crimes like theft, procurement, or pimping. It was agreed that *Schupo* officers could help by protecting the (female) welfare workers on patrol but would no longer decide independently if a woman was suspected of 'hwG', nor check appointment cards without instigation from the health office.[235] However, as *Schupo* officers were regionally bound, they could not cover the whole area served by district clinics which had merged. For instance, the ZZ in Wedding but also covered the

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[230] Ibid.
[231] Ibid.
[232] 'Gesetz zur Bekämpfung der Geschlechtskrankheiten', 14.06.1960, 352-6-5047, StHH.
[233] *Senator Gesundheitswesen,* 'Einrichtung eines ständigen Bereitschaftsdienstes', 10.12.1959, *Geschlechtskrankheiten,* PHS.
[234] *Bezirksamt* Wedding to *Senator Gesundheitswesen*, 12.02.1960, B-Rep-004-529, LAB; *Senator Gesundheitswesen,* 'Einrichtung eines ständigen Bereitschaftsdienstes', 10.12.1959, *Geschlechtskrankheiten,* PHS.
[235] *Bezirksamt* Wedding to *Senator Gesundheitswesen*, 12.02.1960, B-Rep-004-529, LAB; 'Behandlung geschlechtskrankverdächtige Personen', 09.11.1959, *Geschlechtskrankheiten,* PHS.

Tiergarten district, at which point in a patrol the supporting officers were no longer permitted to follow.[236] In some cases, therefore, *Kripo* officers were also recruited.[237]

Although independent police work on the basis of the GBG was reduced considerably, cooperation with the health office continued to occur regularly. In early 1961, health offices in Berlin organised vehicle patrols with welfare workers and one officer, and observational patrols by welfare workers in bars and private residences with police support. Where possible, 'hwG'-women were brought to the Wedding central clinic with its extended opening hours.[238] On-duty officers were instructed of local counselling centres opening times and made aware of the ZZ's night duty.[239] A 1978 article described patrols carried out by social workers with police standing by.[240] This continued cooperation was particularly evident for street-working women. In 1980, Kitty described the GBG as follows:

> We have to go for a check-up every 14 days. And if we can't, which happens from time to time, the vice police drive around outside and collects you.[241]

As in West Berlin, the precise implementation of the GBG, and its implications for the cooperation between police and health offices, was decided at the local level across the FRG. Some cities implemented a 24-hour on-call service, to allow VD examinations directly after women were picked up by the police, whilst in other cities police departments declared their willingness to jail them overnight until the *Beratungsstellen* opened. In Frankfurt, counselling centre staff who carried out patrols were given the status of 'auxiliary police officer' and, into the 1970s, were permitted to carry weapons on duty.[242] In Wiesbaden, a welfare worker was given an 'auxiliary police badge', and thus allowed to apprehend prostitutes or 'hwG'-persons.[243] Until 1969, Cologne's *Sichtungsstelle* offered a middle ground, a separate location where women could be brought to at all hours. However, in Cologne, as in West Berlin, the level of police aid was drastically reduced in this period.

Until late 1961, Cologne's health office could count on support from the local police. Staff could add names to the local 'wanted' lists (*Fahndungslisten*) and police

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[236] *Senator Gesundheitswesen* to *Polizeipräsident*, 'Beteiligung der Polizei', 12.08.1959, Geschlechtskrankheiten, PHS.
[237] 'Vermerk', 09.05.1960, *Geschlechtskrankheiten,* PHS.
[238] 'Organisation der Ge-Fürsorge in Berlin', 08.03.1961, 352-6-4688, StHH.
[239] 'Vermerk', 18.08.1969, *Geschlechtskrankheiten,* PHS.
[240] 'Zum Arzt'.
[241] Biermann, *Wir sind Frauen!*, 120.
[242] Lindner, *Gesundheitspolitik*, 336.
[243] Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 165.

officers brought women they found to the *Beratungsstelle* or *Sichtungsstelle.* Similar procedures were usual across NRW, and local health offices typically had direct contact with the local *Kripo,* who would pass the information on to the officers on patrol. At the same time, the chief health office in NRW had instituted a central tracing file for prostitutes and 'hwG'-persons, which was updated in regular exchange with local health offices.[244] The police cooperation was halted, however, due to a state-level circular from NRW's Minister of the Interior, titled 'Cooperation of the police in the fight against VD' (*Mitwirkung der Polizei bei der Bekämpfung von Geschlechtskrankheiten*, 21.11.1961). This circular denoted that police aid in the search for women who missed appointments should be restricted solely to communicating (in written form) their place of residence to the health office.[245] It represented a considerable reduction in police involvement. Dr Voss, then director of Cologne's counselling centre saw this as a significant impediment to the work of the health office, in particular the monitoring of so-called 'clandestine' prostitutes who lived outside of Cologne's traditional brothel streets and tended to avoid registration. Ten years after the passage of the GBG, Voss subsequently identified the law's central failure as its lack of policing measures.[246]

Over the 1960s and 1970s, local police departments were increasingly unwilling to provide officers and resources to implement the GBG. As Voss identified, these disputes illustrate the contradictions inherent in the law itself. Whilst the GBG included several coercive measures to be implemented against 'hwG'-women who did not cooperate, it saw only a supporting role for police in their enforcement. Moreover, with police departments given new powers over the period to monitor and arrest women who sold sex—as explored in the following chapters—they became less reliant on the provisions of the GBG to manage commercial sex.

Nevertheless, police officers continued to bring women and girls they met in Cologne's streets and bars to the city's *Sichtungsstelle* until its closure in 1969, even outside of normal opening hours. Until 1963, almost 87% of all *Sichtungsstelle* inmates had been brought there by the police, either by *Kripo* officers, *Schupo* or the railway police.[247] Often, police officers looked to admit women and girls under the age of majority (21), as the alternatives—searching for family members or contacting a reform

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[251] 'Bekämpfung der Geschlechtskrankheiten', 24.05.1960, *Geschlechtskrankheiten,* PHS.
[245] Voss, 'Die heimliche Prostitution', Acc-672-A13, HAStK.
[246] Ibid.
[247] Ibid.

home—proved particularly difficult during the night. They were impeded by the *Sichtungsstelle*'s relocation in 1964, after which only five designated beds for underage inmates remained. *Sichtungsstelle* staff also regularly refused to accept girls under the age of sixteen, ostensibly to protect them from the immoral influence of prostitutes.[248] The girls did not necessarily need to have been caught selling sex; often referred to as wild or wayward ('*verwahrlost'*), their presence in disreputable bars, or tales of promiscuity could suffice for police officers to bring them to the *Sichtungsstelle* as ostensible public health measures continued to be implemented as a moral issue.

By the late 1960s, the effectiveness of Cologne's *Sichtungsstelle* was in doubt. Staff were no longer permitted to hold women aged 21 and above against their will, and most left shortly after arrival. This tricky legal situation, combined with staff's reluctance to accept underage girls, led to the *Sichtungsstelle*'s eventual closure on 1 May 1969. From this point on, 'hwG'-women caught on patrol were simply left with a document requiring them to attend the counselling centre.[249] In response, the head of Cologne's *Kripo*, Karl Kiehne, wrote to his West Berlin counterpart in August 1969 to enquire after the cooperation between police and health offices in the fight against VD: concerned that jailing women without using the time to work on a case against them was unlawful, Kiehne asked what was to be done with 'hwG'-women met on patrol.[250]

In Hamburg, the reduction of police aid in the monitoring of 'hwG'-women across the period was less stark. Here, the responsibility for ensuring 'hwG'-women attended their appointments rested officially with the health offices, yet there continued to be significant police involvement throughout this period, in finding and apprehending women who missed appointments, refused to cooperate, or were found incapacitated, for instance, under the influence of alcohol.[251] Despite health office employees disputing in 1978 that there had ever been an agreement between health office and police, documents from 1959 suggest the contrary. In November 1959 Hamburg police and health offices, after much discussion, agreed that the police department would continue its practice of searching for and apprehending women who had failed to attend their health office appointments. Yet, alongside this, both concurred that the official

[248] 'Sichtungsstelle des Gesundheitsamtes', 18.11.1968, Acc-735-A58, HAStK.
[249] 'Leichte Damen traten für Beamtin ein', *K-StA*, 24.08.1970.
[250] 'Vermerk', 18.08.1969, *Geschlechtskrankheiten,* PHS.
[251] 'Mitwirkung der Polizeibehörde', 23.02.1959, 131-1-II-668, StHH.

involvement of the police in welfare and health measures should be avoided.[252] Thus, police involvement in the search for women under health office surveillance was to continue, whilst the *official* responsibility remained with the health office. Individual cases from the course of the 1960s also confirm continued police involvement following this agreement.[253]

The GBG instigated the gradual disintegration of a long alliance between police and medical authorities in the management of commercial sex.[254] Across West Germany, health offices found different local solutions to combat the general reduction of police involvement in patrols for 'hwG'-women. Yet despite restrictions in the GBG, police cooperation did not end entirely. In Berlin, police continued to check *Bockscheine* into the 1980s. In 1984, women who sold sex in Hamburg reported that the local vice police still carried out patrols and *Bockschein* checks.[255] In 1990, when Alfons Heinz-Trossen of the Wiesbaden *Beratungsstelle* carried out a questionnaire of West German health offices, 16.5% of the 152 respondents claimed that local police continued to play an important role in the search for prostitute women.[256] 39 local health offices agreed that point of the *Bockschein* was to make the work of the vice police easier.[257]

Patrols—whether carried out by police or health office staff—did not guarantee that missing women would be found. Designated house checks to find missing women rested on the accuracy of available records. Women who had given false addresses or workplaces could evade being forcibly brought to the health office or to the closed wards.[258] At the same time, officers were only permitted to bring women whose names featured in the alerts, leading to accusations of blackmail or favouritism when some women were picked up and not others.[259] The bureaucracy associated with initiating a search should also not be underestimated. With consistently low attendance levels,

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[252] *Gesundheitsbehörde* to *Behörde für Inneres*, 03.10.1978, 136-1-4614; 'Mitwirkung der Polizeibehörde', 24.11.1959, 131-1-II-668; 'Auszug aus der Niederschrift über die Fachbesprechung 3/1973 am 19.12.1973', 352-6-5047, all StHH.
[253] See: Koppruch, report, 24.02.1978, 352-6-5399, StHH.
[254] Wiesbaden also saw a gradual reduction in police help over the period: Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 163.
[255] 'Der Staat & die Prostituierten: Beratungsstellen für Geschlechtskrankheiten', *Hydra Nachtexpress*, 1984, 66.
[256] Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 122.
[257] Ibid., 134.
[258] See cases from Acc-1304-A30 and Acc-1304-A31, HAStK.
[259] Holtschmidt, 'Dortige Antwort vom 16.6.67', 19.07.1967, 352-6-5047, StHH.

Hamburg's ZB staff described the system for monitoring attendance, the alerts and patrols, as out of control. Around 1967, it usually took 3-4 weeks to initiate forced measures against those who missed appointments.[260] Ten years later, staff still registered the significant number (16%) of registered prostitutes under police alerts. When registered women moved between towns and cities—each with their own separate systems for monitoring women who sold sex—counselling centre staff looked to trace them across the country.[261] Documents note that these search requests 'trigger[ed] an administrative burden which, in view of the low health risk posed by the prostitutes, raises the question of the proportionality of the means'.[262]

Treatment

Despite, or perhaps due to, frequent testing, VD diagnoses amongst monitored women were rare, particularly amongst residents of the brothel streets who typically attended regularly. In 1963, Dr Voss of Cologne's counselling centre differentiated between brothel-based prostitutes, where diagnoses of VD were decreasing in number, and 'clandestine' prostitutes', where VD cases were supposedly on the rise.[263] Although VD rates fluctuated in the 1960s and 1970s, there is little to suggest that regular attendees in any of the three cities had VD in high numbers. As the president of the Hamburg medical council stated in 1968:

> diseases are very rare in this group, because these "girls" generally belong to the most enlightened [*aufgeklärt*] people—as far as venereal diseases are concerned.[264]

Rarely do health office files make direct reference to encouraging the use of condoms, although references suggesting that women who sold sex knew how to protect themselves from venereal disease are more common. Nevertheless, documents from 1948 record that Hamburg staff had previously used appointments to inform women of the necessities of condom usage.[265]

The 1953 GBG, based on its 1927 predecessor and instigated during the post-war VD epidemic, specified that the counselling centres themselves should not treat cases they identified. This prohibition remained in force despite penicillin's availability

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[260] 'Antrag auf Schaffung einer 4. Stelle', 07.11.1967, 352-6-1221, StHH.
[261] Mobility was often a way for women to escape regulation, see; Wingfield, *World of Prostitution*, 6.
[262] 'Entwurf einer Senatsdrucksache, Veränderung der Aufgabenstellung der ZB', 352-6-4687, StHH.
[263] Voss, 'Die heimliche Prostitution', Acc-672-A13, HAStK.
[264] 'Leichte Mädchen wollen nicht mehr Schlange stehen', *BILD,* 16.09.1968.
[265] Naumann to *Oberstaatsanwalt*, 'Ermittlungsverfahren', 1948, 351-10-II-2405, StHH.

as quick and effective cure for both syphilis and gonorrhoea. When local *Beratungsstellen* diagnosed VD, they were typically required to send the patient to a doctor or a hospital ward.[266] Most also had a separate, stricter procedure for the treatment of women who refused to comply.

At Hamburg's ZB, women were either sent to a doctor or to Heidberg hospital for treatment. If registered women did not provide proof afterwards, the ZB set in motion the procedure for a forced admission to a closed hospital ward.[267] Until 1957, Cologne's 'hwG'-women were treated on the closed ward in the University hospital. When this was shut down, the *Sichtungsstelle* was given the designation of a hospital wing ('Krankenhausfachabteilung im Sinne §23 des GBG') and treatments were usually carried out here.[268] However, those who refused could face forced admission to the women's hospital ward in Brauweiler, part of the larger workhouse complex on site. West Berlin, by contrast, deviated from the separation of diagnosis and cure.[269] Cases in which a diagnosis was reached as part of the regular check-up were tended to in the counselling centre itself. Those forcibly brought to the VD exam were treated in hospital or in a closed ward at the Free University's dermatology clinic. If women refused, the case would be taken to the district court.[270]

Crucially, the measures detailed above did not reflect persistent ambiguities in the diagnosis process. Although staff regularly carried out VD exams, they could not always tell if a patient was still infectious. Sometimes numerous tests were necessary to distinguish whether evidence of a VD was simply traces of a previous illness, tests which overworked and understaffed health offices were unlikely to perform. For women who sold sex, this distinction was important, for the GBG forbade sexual intercourse when infectious. Health offices would often order women to stop working for several days after receiving treatments, during which time they could not earn an income, but would continue to accrue costs, such as brothel rent. Continuing to work, on the other hand, could see them punished with a prison sentence of up to three years.[271]

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[266] Lindner, *Gesundheitspolitik*, 290.
[267] 'Entwurf einer Senatsdrucksache, Veränderung der Aufgabenstellung der ZB', 352-6-4687, StHH.
[268] Voss, 'Die heimliche Prostitution', Acc-672-A13, HAStK.
[269] Berlin's *Beratungsstellen* had treated VD directly since the mid-1920s: Sauerteig, *Krankheit, Sexualität, Gesellschaft*, 172.
[270] 'Organisation der Ge-Fürsorge in Berlin', 08.03.1961, 352-6-4688, StHH; Lindner, *Gesundheitspolitik,* 338.
[271] Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 144–46.

Although remedies for VD had reduced in severity with the availability of penicillin, the associated measures represented a significant intrusion into the lives of registered women. Particularly the involuntary hospitalisations, often preceded by a forcible removal from their home or workplace, went beyond typical medical care. Doctors on the closed wards frequently injected patients with penicillin without first confirming the diagnosis, whilst non-compliance was met with fines and short imprisonments.[272] In 1965, the chief physician and medical director of the Wiesbaden *Beratungsstelle* suggested 'prophylactic' penicillin injections without prior diagnosis, to make sure 'asocials' did not spend too much time in the clinic.[273] With the registration of 'hwG'-persons integrated within the criminal justice system, medical care often took a backseat to disciplinary measures.

West German VD policy remained reliant on coercive measures against arbitrarily defined risk groups, with the GBG explicitly allowing for the circumvention of their civil rights. Examining the GBG in practice illustrates the many ways that health office measures encroached on the lives of registered women, offering a necessary counterpoint to more positivist histories of post-war public health and welfare policies. By taking a granular view, however, it also becomes clear that health office registration was far more complicated in practice, shifting even as the law was upheld. Variations in the GBG's implementation become evident through the local-level comparison. Indeed, paying attention to the impact of such variations would surely also complicate our understandings of how previous regulatory systems functioned. Here, the system's intransparency appears central, particularly if we consider the mobility of women who sold sex, forced to contend with shifting interpretations of the GBG by local authorities.

Reactions to and negotiations of health office surveillance

With the overwhelming majority of sources on the counselling centres produced by staff or administrators, letters such as the 1968 Hamburg protest that opened this chapter can indicate how 'hwG'-women and prostitutes experienced the system of health office surveillance. The 1968 letter saw almost ninety registered women band together to let

[272] 'Vermerk über die Amtsoberfürsorgerinnen-Besprechung', 24.04.1957, 352-6-5047, StHH; Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 134.
[273] Ibid., 169.

their voices and perspectives be heard. The signatories complained of the room size at the ZB, the smell, and the waiting times (often several hours).

> People should see the small cubicles where the mass processing takes place. Perhaps it should be mentioned that every woman must expose herself down below!
> The room is about $2m^2$!!![274]

They argued that these conditions affected both patients and staff— 'the stench makes every nurse sick, and us too'—and demanded that the appointments at least be less frequent, to minimise the long wait times. Underpinning it all was their claim that registered prostitutes, unlike the rest of the population, took measures to protect their health.

The poor conditions of the ZB were not new. A 1960 inspection had found the rooms 'dark, narrow, cold'.[275] Yet the letter's signatories ensured their plight received media coverage by sending a copy of their letter to *BILD* magazine. Whether media coverage resulted in meaningful change is another question; the resulting *BILD* article included a response from health senator Seeler, who acknowledged the 'dilemma' but pointed to more pressing concerns—the need for a new hospital or 'mother counselling centres'.[276] In a separate reply to the complainants, Seeler acknowledged the inadequate space and announced his intention to check if something could be done about the long waiting times.[277] The concerns cited in the letter do not appear to have been resolved.

Outside organised protest actions or open letters, individuals responded variously to health office registration and surveillance. The following section examines how women reacted, how they negotiated, challenged or complied with the measures they faced. These varied reactions—alone or with others, with or without resource to media or legal aid, or the support of partners and friends—allow for greater exploration of the impact of health office measures on the lives of women who sold sex. Yet incidents of resistance feature more heavily in the remaining sources than cases of compliance, and this imbalance bears remembering. Hershatter's plea to 'resist the desire' to romanticise women's agency and to acknowledge the silences of the historical record is particularly relevant for this section, which also contends with significant archival imbalances—the following cases are primarily from Hamburg.[278] This is due to

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[274] Anita S. to Seeler, 352-6-1221, StHH.
[275] 'Vermerk', 05.12.1960, 352-6-1221, StHH.
[276] 'Leichte Mädchen wollen nicht mehr Schlange stehen'.
[277] Seeler to Anita S., 24.09.1968, 352-6-5400, StHH.
[278] Hershatter, *Dangerous Pleasures*, 28.

a notable weighting in the available sources, the *Staatsarchiv Hamburg* having preserved certain files no longer available for Berlin or Cologne.[279] Perhaps this preservation is because Hamburg registered women who sold sex at the Central Counselling Centre for Prostitutes, separately from general VD care in the city, earmarking the files as archive-worthy. Despite the imbalances, including the following cases allows me to view health office surveillance not simply as it was imposed from above, but also its impact on and the involvement of the women it targeted. Where possible, I include examples from Cologne and West Berlin to further the analysis.

Resistance, avoidance, compliance

In looking for women's reactions to the system of health office surveillance, I begin with their reactions to or avoidance of the registration itself. Indeed, throughout the period, many women who sold sex did so without registering at their local *Beratungsstelle*. Although women who worked in 'prostitute residences' typically registered of their own accord, those who worked outside of brothel streets could more easily avoid registration, unless caught by police officers. Many, if not most, of the registered women in the three cities were registered only after contact with the authorities.

Here, their mobility could play a central role. Health office surveillance from each of the three cities indicates the frequency with which women moved, sometimes between neighbouring cities, such as between Cologne and Bonn, but often also further afield.[280] By moving, they could avoid targeted patrols—which often relied on address records—and weeks of health appointments until they encountered police or social workers in the new town. Between December 1954 and early 1968, correspondence between local health offices placed Annemarie M.* in Hamburg, Düsseldorf, Kassel, Flensburg and Nuremberg.[281] Her mobility was not unusual. Whilst some women indicated their move in advance, or registered on arrival, many who did not work in local brothel streets waited until they encountered patrolling police to register at their new location. Communication between health offices on such matters was frequent.

In response to a recent health office summons, Anna's husband wrote a letter to Hamburg's police chief in February 1968, asking that Anna be removed from the health

[279] Cologne has been particularly struck; many former health office files remain unrecovered after the collapse of the city archive in 2009.
[280] See: Acc-1647-A12, HAStK.
[281] 'Auskunftsersuchen bei der ZB', 19.03.1968, 352-6-4689, StHH.

office surveillance. He claimed that his wife had not sold sex since December 1966, and that she instead fulfilled her housewifely duties. His intervention echoes Siobhán Hearne's study of petitions in tsarist Russia, in which she finds men, including male partners, who vouched for women registered as prostitutes against their will.[282] Such interventions resurface repeatedly in ZB files. Here, ZB staff responded by requesting a negative VD result from Anna. Although it did not arrive, the *Kripo* advised against calling on the patrols, as her husband was known as a 'dangerous thug'.[283]

Typically, health office staff required proof of alternate income—either a steady job or assurances of a husband who could provide support—and a period of continued monitoring, before removing a woman from active registration. When Helene L.* tried to leave Hamburg's registration with the help of a lawyer, the ZB initially acquiesced, until she was accused by police of selling sex in early 1972.[284] Requests for proof of alternate employment or a husband with a steady job were common throughout the period and typical practice not restricted to Hamburg. A description from West Berlin indicates a similar approach:

> You can also get rid of the card. You submit your application for exemption and then you have to go to the examination for another year, but only every four weeks and then every quarter of a year, and then you get rid of the thing again. Only, you have to have a job to show for it. You can't just say, I'm quitting now. What will you live on then? Unless you're married and your husband works, etc.[285]

Health offices across West Germany continued to expect the breadwinner-husband and housewife marriage well into the 1970s, thus speaking also to persistence of traditional gender roles, even in these larger cities.

Some women wrote directly to health office staff to portray their situation and request freedom from the examinations. Such letters offer a rare chance for registered women to speak outside of the courtroom. Yet they also depict how class and experience of poverty determined their susceptibility to health office measures, as evident in the case of Hertha H.*. Her handwritten letter, dated December 1968, conveys a distress not evident in the lawyer-penned letter referenced above. In basic German, Hertha wrote of her struggles as a divorced mother of four children. As well as social support, Hertha claimed to work 'honestly', both with and without papers. Yet still, she was being picked up by patrols and treated 'like a criminal'.

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[282] Siobhan Hearne, 'To Denounce or Defend? Public Participation in the Policing of Prostitution in Late Imperial Russia', *Kritika*, 19 (2018), 737.
[283] 'Auskunftsersuchen bei der ZB', 19.03.1968, 352-6-4689, StHH.
[284] Schwartz-Uppendieck, 1972, 352-6-5400, StHH.
[285] Biermann, *Wir sind Frauen!*, 122.

> On 21.11.1968 at half past nine [taken] from the flat my children cried and asked my mother Grandma, what has our mummy done that the bad men take her away to Heidberg I think I can't be treated like this I am a free citizen.

The burdens of the registration become undoubtedly clear within the letter, which covers insults from the police, the strain of the repeated examinations and the effects on her family. She wrote of her intention to file a complaint, and ended the letter with a plea:

> I am not what they say I am I love my children and I live for them I don't want my children to be separated from me because I am a mother. Every time I was examined I was healthy I'm a guinea pig [*Versuchskanickel*].[286]

The following day a social worker responded to Hertha's letter, acknowledging the difficulty of her situation. Nevertheless, she claimed that Hertha 'could not deny' that she had been repeatedly met by patrols in certain bars, which suggest that she was selling sex. The letter recommended that Hertha avoid these bars in future and take on regular employment. Once she could prove that she had supported herself for three months, she would be freed from registration.[287] Hertha's case exemplifies the disadvantages faced by single mothers unable to use the accepted breadwinner-husband model to escape registration and by those working in the informal economy or whose surroundings did not appear 'respectable'. Here, health office surveillance served to exacerbate existing inequalities in its implementation.

This imbalance is supported further by examples of women who turned to private doctors to minimise health office intervention. This required the express permission of the local clinic and was varyingly restricted across time and locations. Some clinics differentiated between 'prostitutes' and 'hwG-women' in determining eligibility. Most significantly, this choice was only available to those with the necessary funds to pay for regular private healthcare.

In Hamburg, private examinations had been permitted as an alternative to in-clinic examinations in the 1950s.[288] On registering at the ZB in November 1953, Lotte D.* was ordered to attend weekly VD exams, either at the ZB (for free) or with a list of chosen doctors (on own costs). Yet when she again registered at the ZB in December 1956, Lotte was required to attend twice-weekly exams at the ZB, with no possibility of

[286] H.H. letter, 18.12.1968, 352-6-5400, StHH.
[287] Trein to H.H., 19.12.1968, 352-6-5400, StHH.
[288] For other local *Beratungsstellen* that permitted 'hwG'-persons to turn to private doctors, see: Lindner, *Gesundheitspolitik*, 338.

turning to a private doctor.[289] Lotte challenged this requirement in the courts, the case eventually reaching the Federal Administrative Court (*Bundesverwaltungsgericht*), which decided against her.[290] Nevertheless, both her willingness to argue for her right to see a private doctor and the arguments utilised, offer further insights into this aspect of health office registration. Within the case, Lotte's lawyer argued that

> in Hamburg in particular [...] going to the central clinic (ZB), which is located on a main road, is like running the gauntlet and cannot be compared to a discreet visit to a specialist.[291]

Although legal arguments need not reflect the direct opinions of the plaintiff, the central location and name of Hamburg's 'counselling centre for prostitutes' was most likely associated with stigma for the registered women. The lawyer also argued that the forced registration of women, but not of men, went against the equalities enshrined in the constitution:

> it is not understandable why men who engage in same-sex intercourse through so-called hustling are treated differently by the authorities than female prostitution.[292]

Remarkably, the ZB responded to the inequality argument by stating that far fewer men sold sex:

> Due to the different way in which men engage in same-sex intercourse, the spread of venereal diseases through this group of persons is not as great as with female prostitutes.[293]

Although many European cities were beginning to register a growth in syphilis infections amongst men who had sex with men, West German medical authorities continued to see women as primarily responsible for the spread of venereal disease.[294] Only in the 1980s would men who had sex with men be seen as a main risk group for the spread of HIV/AIDS. Interestingly, neither party in the legal case commented on the role of male clients of prostitute women in the spread of VD.[295]

From 1976, Hamburg was allowing private appointments again.[296] As Pat detailed in 1980:

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[289] 'BVerwG IC 190.57', 21.04.1960, *Geschlechtskrankheiten,* PHS. Hamburg stopped this practice in February 1955: 'Bekämpfung der Geschlechtstkrankheiten', Glaser, 22.12.1954, 352-6-1992, StHH.

[290] 'BVerwG IC 190.57', 21.04.1960, *Geschlechtskrankheiten,* PHS.

[291] Ibid.

[292] Ibid.

[293] Ibid.

[294] Lindner, *Gesundheitspolitik*, 371.

[295] By contrast, US group COYOTE successfully used the gendered double standard to abolish mandatory VD quarantines: Melinda Chateauvert, *Sex Workers Unite: A History of the Movement from Stonewall to SlutWalk* (Boston, 2013), 64–65.

[296] 'Vermerk', 25.11.1977, 352-6-4687, StHH; In 1984, Berlin, Hamburg and Bremen allowed registered women to go to private doctors for their VD exams. In Lübeck, Karlsruhe and

> I've had a registration certificate [*Bockschein*] for a long time, I had to do it back then, otherwise they would have arrested me [*mich kassiert*]. But I don't go there for examinations, I have my own doctor, I'm a private patient. Of course it costs something, but I need it, I have to be able to afford it. I've been to the health office a few times, no! […] The way they treat you there, it's no longer humane.[297]

Even during periods when VD examinations by private physicians were not permitted as substitute for regular attendance, some women turned to private doctors for a second opinion and therewith to challenge the clinic measures. Margot B.*, for instance, wrote to the ZB in 1972. She detailed how, after a diagnosis of VD and the instruction to check in to the '"hospital" Heidberg', she turned to a doctor on the Reeperbahn, who examined her and declared her healthy—'so your diagnosis was wrong!'. She ended her letter with the following statement on her experience at the ZB

> Even if I sell sex [*der Gewerbsunzucht nachgehe*], this does not give you the right to treat me like a piece of dirt. By the way, I would like to tell you that I consider your diagnosis as defamation and will act accordingly.[298]

She employed judicial language, evidencing a level of legal literacy, and insisted on her individual rights in the face of health office registration. Although her challenge was unsuccessful, it offers a further perspective on the intrusions of health office surveillance.

The reactions explored above indicate that turning to private doctors could enable some to avoid the experience of the *Beratungsstellen*. Both the stigma and the direct treatment by clinic staff were cited as reasons to search for an alternative. Nevertheless, this possibility rested both on their own access to the necessary funds and the permission of the local clinic. Whether women in Cologne and West Berlin were permitted to turn to private doctors at this time remains unclear. The dispersal of counselling centres in West Berlin, however, likely made regular attendance less obvious to outsiders than in Hamburg.

In examples cited above, women called upon legal help to challenge the reach of the health offices. They recruited lawyers to avoid or leave registration, or to insist on their right to private care. Still others enlisted legal help in response to perceived mistreatments, for instance to challenge their forced admission to the Heidberg hospital ward for treatment and to request a repeat diagnostic exam.[299] Although sometimes the

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Stuttgart, they were permitted to go to private doctors for treatment, but not for check-ups: 'Der Staat & die Prostituierten', 65.

[297] Biermann, *Wir sind Frauen!*, 122.

[298] M.B. to ZB, received 25.10.1972, 352-6-5399, StHH.

[299] Türk, 'Widerspruch gegen Verfügung', 24.04.1968, 352-6-5399, StHH.

lawyer in question worked for a husband or partner, the recurring appearance of certain individuals might also indicate the role of private networks in the recommendation and recruitment of lawyers willing to take on these cases against the health offices.

Even though such interventions were often unsuccessful, they could spark internal investigations into the boundaries of health office surveillance. This was the case in 1961, when a previous patient of the Heidberg hospital VD ward filed a complaint regarding deprivation of liberty against a doctor who had refused to allow her to go for a walk in the hospital grounds. She argued that, as she had been admitted voluntarily, there was no legal basis to restrict her movement, and in doing so initiated an investigation into the limits of hospital holds.[300] Although the VD clinics had typically existed, with interruptions, since the late 1920s, the systems of surveillance and intervention now contended with the rights enshrined in Basic Law, and with registered women willing to argue on the basis of their individual rights. As the period progressed, numerous pillars of health office surveillance were challenged. The uncertain legal basis to hold women against their will at Cologne's *Sichtungsstelle*, for instance, led to its eventual closure in 1969.[301]

When Inge B.* turned both to a private doctor and a lawyer in 1968 to prove to Hamburg's ZB that she did not have VD, her case provoked an interesting response from its director Dr Holtschmidt. Holtschmidt suggested that perhaps Inge had undergone treatment already. She posited the use of self-administered penicillin tablets, which she described as 'no problem' for prostitutes to source, or that Inge had 'prepared' for her examination with a vaginal douche.[302] ZB employee Willers made a similar note in another case, which suggested it was a relatively common practice for women to prepare for their examinations by douching in effort to hide a possible VD case.[303]

When assessing claims by registered women, ZB staff often commented on typical 'tricks' used to circumvent the requirements of registration. This was noted in 1970, when Sigrid S.* hid in a cupboard whilst her husband claimed she was not home.[304] Similarly, in Cologne in 1965, Christel L.* avoided a targeted patrol by refusing to open the door. When they returned, a man—'the suspected pimp'—declared

[300] Hopf to Beckermann, 09.11.1961, 352-6-4689, StHH.
[301] 'Leichte Damen traten für Beamtin ein'.
[302] Holtschmidt to II2, 26.04.1968, 352-6-5399, StHH.
[303] Willers, 'Vermerk', 31.01.1968, 352-6-5400, StHH.
[304] Willers, 'Vermerk', 27.05.1970, 352-6-5400, StHH.

he was unable to open the door, being locked in himself.[305] Although it is likely that many women tried to avoid patrols, the presumption that they were employing tricks could mean that more serious circumstances were overlooked. When Barbara H.* was found by patrolling officers lying in bed, the assertions by her and her hosts that she was ill were resolutely ignored. A later examination by a hospital doctor identified her to be suffering from a serious case of pulmonary tuberculosis. Nevertheless, Willers defended the actions of the officers

> because often, with the mentality of this group of people, the officials have no other choice to get their way. Lying in bed is a trick often used by prostitutes to avoid being brought in.[306]

Medical director Dr Atmer agreed:

> Being bedridden alone should not be a reason for them not to carry out the transfer, as this is a way often used by prostitutes to evade coercive measures. Moreover, the enforcement officers have precise instructions, which they are obliged to follow.[307]

The presumption that these women were not to be trusted was taken to excuse the mistreatment of a seriously ill patient. The willingness by clinic staff to defend this outcome indicates a wider-reaching distrust of registered women at Hamburg's ZB.

In 1962, Professor Hopf, head of the closed ward in Hamburg's Heidberg hospital, complained that it was common for prostitutes to prepare for their admission 'with lively alcohol consumption' before arriving in Heidberg in the late hours.[308] Although interpreted primarily as a nuisance, this reaction could suggest apprehension or fear of the hospital VD ward by the patients. Accounts of violent reactions to news of hospital treatments reinforce this interpretation. When Wilhelmine L.*, forcibly brought to the ZB for a VD examination in 1964, found she was to be taken to the hospital, she smashed the window and escaped. Dr Holtschmidt interpreted her actions as 'intentional'.[309] A year later, another patient smashed the windows of the ZB in response to a similar prospect. In this case, the perpetrator did not leave, but apologised and told staff 'she had to vent her feelings' (*sich Luft machen*).[310] Cases of women destroying furniture and trying to escape Cologne's *Sichtungsstelle* indicate that such reactions, and the emotions they gave expression to, were not singular to Hamburg.[311]

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[305] 'Vemerk', 21.12.1965, Acc-1304-A31, HAStK.
[306] Willers, 19.06.1967, 352-6-5399, StHH.
[307] 'Zusammenfassung', 21.06.1967, 352-6-5399, StHH.
[308] Hopf to Beckermann, 08.08.1962, 352-6-4689, StHH.
[309] Holtschmidt to *Rechtsabteilung*, 08.07.1964, 352-6-5400, StHH.
[310] 'Schadenersatz', 26.02.1965, 352-6-1221, StHH.
[311] 'Sichtungsstelle', 08.09.1954, Acc-607-A3, HAStK.

Resistance to health office measures is clearest where the measures were at their strictest: on the closed hospital wards with their restrictive house rules. In 1978 the Berlin newspaper *Tagesspiegel* recalled inmate 'revolts' in the closed dermatology wards in West Berlin.[312] In Hamburg's Heidberg hospital female patient inmates regularly made contact with male patients in the ward opposite.[313] In 1963, two young female patients used these contacts to escape out of the first-floor window on a rope and that same night, they were back in the bars of St. Pauli.[314] Yet aside from these more spectacular escapes, other inmates found less showy, but equally effective ways to leave the ward, such as the woman who claimed her two-year-old child was in the flat with no guardian, was permitted to leave but then did not return.[315] In another case, when Maria W.* escaped from the Heidberg hospital ward not once but twice in 1967, the health office insisted on continuing proceedings against her, as

> this fact would immediately become known in the circles of the prostitutes and the pimps and would only strengthen the already quite difficult situation due to the undisciplined behaviour of the forced inmates in GH [General Hospital] Heidberg.[316]

In all the cases referenced above, the missing women were soon found again. Escapes, although they could provide immediate respite from the conditions on the closed ward, rarely resulted in freedom from health office surveillance altogether.

In searching for resistance, it is easy to lose sight of the, presumably large, group of women who mostly complied with the measures imposed against them. Their compliance, unlike instances of resistance, is undoubtedly more difficult to trace. Compliance produced fewer reports and less paperwork; attending appointments regularly did not lead to fines or special patrols, court cases, or incarcerations. Although it remains difficult to retrospectively assess numbers, it seems that women who lived in registered 'prostitute residences'—Herbertstraße, the *Eros-Center*, and the *Palais d'Amour* in Hamburg, or in Kleine Brinkgasse or the *Eros-Center* in Cologne—for the most part attended their appointments regularly.[317] Regular VD exams were a prerequisite for life in the residences and the fixed location of their workplace made the avoidance of targeted patrols particularly challenging. Recreating the 'typical' relationship with health office surveillance of women who worked outside of designated

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[312] 'Zum Arzt'.
[313] Hopf, 24.07.1962, 352-6-4689, StHH.
[314] *Gesundheitsbehörde* to *Rechtsdezernat,* 05.06.1963, 352-6-5400, StHH.
[315] Atmer, undated, 352-6-4689, StHH.
[316] 'Antrag auf Strafverfolgung', 03.01.1968, 352-6-5400, StHH.
[317] This is borne out by remaining files, e.g., Acc-1647-A12, HAStK.

streets and houses is more difficult. Although individual letters from Cologne penned by women outside the residences document their promises to comply in response to fines or sanctions, rarely are they paired with evidence that these promises were carried out.[318] Nevertheless, such sources can occasionally provide an insight into their relations with staff members at the VD clinics and complicate the study of health office surveillance—a system which combined interventions of care and coercion into the lives of women who sold sex. These relationships build the focus of the following section.

Clinic staff

Staff at the counselling centres typically comprised of doctors, nurses, welfare workers and administrative staff. The clinics were generally led by doctors, who also participated in national conferences and meetings to determine the future of the fight against VD. Berlin's ZZ was headed by Dr Walter Grimm, who had been working at the Wedding clinic in the late 1940s and had taken over its leadership by the early 1950s, as the clinic took over first the responsibilities of the Tiergarten district (1953) and later Reinickendorf (1960). Both Cologne's *Beratungsstelle* and Hamburg's ZB were led by women in the 1960s and 1970s.

Welfare workers at the counselling centres were traditionally female (*Fürsorgerinnen*). The understanding of welfare work as women's work dated back to the first women's movement, when the role was seen to incorporate motherly skills and qualities.[319] In 1958, the typical tasks of a welfare worker at the Berlin-Kreuzberg clinic included 'welfare counselling and support (office and field work), the monitoring of hwG-persons, doctor's visits, bar and street patrols, raids, the investigation of sources of infection, welfare correspondence, updating the home visits register, reports, monthly statistics'.[320] The role required specialist knowledge and the cultivation of certain relationships, particularly necessary for

> patrol duty [which] requires a long training period, because a promising result can only be guaranteed if the person concerned knows the establishments and the observation areas thoroughly. In addition, special contact must be established with the owners of the premises, waiters, etc.[321]

[318] See cases from Acc-1304-A31, HAStK.
[319] Ebbinghaus, *Opfer und Täterinnen*, 8.
[320] *Gekra-Beratungsstelle* to Hoffman (*Gesundheitsamt* Schöneberg), 06.03.1958, B-Rep-004-534, LAB.
[321] *Bezirksamt* Reinickendorf to *Senator Inneres*, 27.02.1961, B-Rep-004-540, LAB.

Yet by 1960 this role had proven particularly unpopular. The patrols supposedly placed high physical and psychological demands on welfare workers who responded by moving to other fields, which did not require irregular working hours and which offered a 'less fractious audience'. There was, a report from Berlin-Wedding claimed, not a younger generation of welfare workers willing to replace those that left, particularly as this difficult work also tended to be low paid.[322] The nightshift at the Wedding clinic also discouraged medical staff and it proved difficult to find doctors willing to take up work at the clinic.[323]

Staff shortages seem to have abounded. In West Berlin, district clinics were gradually merged to cover larger areas with fewer employees. At Hamburg's ZB, staff numbers were reduced despite a huge increase in registered prostitutes in Hamburg over the period. Whilst in 1949 8 administrative staff were responsible for around 870 registered prostitutes, in 1967 3 administrative staff managed 1850 registered women.[324] Although histories of prostitution have often neglected to examine the staffing of regulation—with studies on Nazi Germany and its legacies a notable exception—considering who worked at the clinics, and the circumstances under which they did so, offers a crucial perspective on how health office registration worked in practice. Where possible, I look also to uncover the interactions between staff and patients.

Longer historical continuities

Freund-Widder has identified significant continuities in paradigms and measures from both the Weimar and Nazi periods to the immediate post-war years in Hamburg. Welfare workers at the ZB who had been let go shortly after the war's end were reinstated due to staff shortages, allowing a continuity in both concepts and practices.[325] Indeed, although Basic Law countered some of the more extreme practices, clinic files from Hamburg, Cologne and West Berlin indicate that certain terminology and interpretative frameworks lasted significantly longer. The term '*Verwahrlosung*', defined in 1929 as a

[322] 'Bekämpfung der Geschlechtskrankheiten', 24.05.1960, *Geschlechtskrankheiten,* PHS; Grimm, 'Zum gegenwärtigen Stand', 9. Lindner, *Gesundheitspolitik*, 367.
[323] *Vermerk*, 24.06.1960, B-Rep-004-529, LAB.
[324] 'Antrag auf Schaffung einer 4. Stelle', 07.11.1967, 352-6-1221, StHH.
[325] Freund-Widder, *Frauen unter Kontrolle*, 257.

> lifestyle which manifests itself in physical neglect or in the unrestrained predominance of individual urges and is based on the inability to manage one's own affairs and to fit oneself into orderly circumstances

remained common as welfare workers frequently described the women and girls they encountered as 'verwahrlost'.[326] A 1979 *Tagesspiegel* article documented the continued use of the diagnosis of *Verwahrlosung* in Hamburg to refer to young women with developmental difficulties.[327] Interpretations of women who sold sex as work-shy or sexually libidinous remained similarly tenacious.

Continuities are particularly evident in the integration of counselling centres in the wider welfare system. Church-affiliated welfare organisations often continued to work with the health offices by transferring women and girls they picked up on patrols.[328] Within local authorities, health offices frequently collaborated with care offices (*Pflegeamt*), although archival restrictions mean this relationship and its persistence has been difficult to recreate.

Care offices had mostly been founded in the aftermath of WWI to coordinate efforts to bring 'fallen women' into reformatories, and to bring about their 'improvement', especially in the context of a post-war venereal disease epidemic.[329] Although rarely featured in historical studies of the Federal Republic, care offices largely survived through the years of Nazi rule, with a remarkable continuity of measures and practices.[330] In 1957, Hamburg's health authority described the central role of the *Pflegeamt* as

> the task of taking care of this group of people [*prostitutes*]. […] a welfare patrol service, tries to catch endangered persons at an early stage in pubs, on ships, on the motorway, etc. The youth authorities intervene in the case of juveniles. Otherwise, attempts are made to reintegrate them into social life by placing them in a home, returning them to their parents, providing them with work. This work is carried out in close cooperation with charitable associations.[331]

In 1966, the tasks of the Hamburg *Pflegeamt* remained 'mainly [to] cover the care of persons who are morally or economically endangered', in association with the ZB.[332]

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[326] Friederike Föcking, *Fürsorge im Wirtschaftsboom: Die Entstehung des Bundessozialhilfegesetzes von 1961* (Munich, 2007), 338.
[327] 'Die unmündigen Mädchen', *Tagesspiegel*, 25.11.1979.
[328] BR-0009-13569 Vol. 1, LAV NRW, 78; Statistisches Amt der Stadt Köln, *Verwaltungsbericht der Stadt Köln 1945/55* (Cologne, 1955), 91–92. See Höhn on church-affiliated welfare and 'endangered' women in garrison towns: Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins*, 178.
[329] Föcking, *Fürsorge im Wirtschafttsboom*, 338.
[330] See: Margot Kreuzer, *Prostitution. Eine sozialgeschichtliche Untersuchung in Frankfurt am Main. Von der Syphilis bis AIDs* (Stuttgart, 1988), 76.
[331] *Gesundheitsbehörde,* 'Anfrage der Vereinten Nationen', 30.07.1957, 131-1-II-668, StHH.
[332] 'Abgrenzung der Aufgabengebiete ZB/Pflegeamt', 18.05.1966, 352-6-4687, StHH.

Hamburg's *Pflegeamt* had a history of close cooperation with Nazi authorities, with women in their care sterilized, sent to reformatories—most notably to *Versorgungsheim Farmsen*—or to concentration camps. Farmsen had around 1,700 beds and was used exclusively to house 'socially difficult' and 'asocial' inmates for forced welfare measures. In Hamburg, the list of reasons for sterilisation was extended to include 'moral imbecility' (*Schwachsinn*).[333] Between 1933 and 1939 over 1,200 sterilisations were carried out in Farmsen and in the *Versorgungsheim Oberaltenallee*.[334] Käthe Petersen, former head of the *Pflegeamt*, had practiced the collective legal incapacitation of 'asocial' women, including prostitutes, to initiate such measures. The role of female welfare workers in the Nazi period arguing for legal incapacitation or sterilisation out of 'care' arguments thus remains an important context for the following years.[335]

After the war's end, Farmsen's inmates remained locked up and Petersen continued to function as their legal guardian.[336] Although legal incapacitation was made more difficult with West German Basic Law, Freund-Widder has documented cases including Käthe M., who was sent to Farmsen in 1942 and remained there until her death in the year 1984.[337] Petersen continued to hold important roles in Hamburg's administration until her retirement in 1966. Although no longer carried out on the same scale, or with the same consequences, legal incapacitation in the FRG continued to be implemented against some women who sold sex. For example, when Margarethe G.* was legally incapacitated, her guardian was a member of Cologne's health office. In 1970, the director of Hamburg's ZB wrote that 32-year-old Margarethe was 'a typical drifter'.[338]

The scale of continuities of both personnel and practice of the Hamburg *Pflegeamt* remains difficult to assess, as most sources in the post-war period are currently uncategorised and inaccessible.[339] Staff continued to play a significant role in

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[333] Emilija Mitrovic, 'Fürsorgerinnen im Nationalsozialismus: Hilfe zur Aussonderung', in *Opfer und Täterinnen*, ed. Ebbinghaus, 29.
[334] Ebbinghaus, *Opfer und Täterinnen*, 9.
[335] Ibid., 9.
[336] Freund-Widder, *Frauen unter Kontrolle*, 182, 220.
[337] Ibid., 225.
[338] Holtschmidt, 05.06.1970, 352-6-5399, StHH. Until 1961, single mothers were not permitted to become legal guardians of their illegitimate children. After this point, they had the right to apply for guardianship: Sybille Buske, '"Fräulein Mutter" vor dem Richterstuh: Der Wandel der öffentlichen Wahrnehmung und rechtlichen Stellung lediger Mütter in der Bundesrepublik 1948 bis 1970', *Werkstatt Geschichte*, 27 (2000), 54.
[339] These files will likely further illuminate the role of welfare workers in the management of commercial sex.

the lives of women who sold sex, however. Regardless of direct personnel continuities, their interventions were evidently marked by both care and coercion. When Hamburg authorities organised the closure and demolition of the Ulricusstraße brothels, *Pflegeamt* staff played a crucial role in determining where the street's former residents moved to, updating records and ensuring no prostitute moved into a house where children were present.[340] On other occasions, they expressed concern about underage prostitution, or physical violence against women by pimps.[341]

Relations between staff and registered women

The relationships between health office staff and registered women likely shaped patients' experiences of health office registration. Alfons Heinz-Trossen's interviews with registered women between 1987 and 1991 illustrate how relations with medical staff continued to be fraught over the years. Women responded that they felt 'rejected' (13.6%), 'despised' (17%) or 'treated inferiorly' (38%) by the examining doctors; only 19.5% felt that they were respected at the counselling centres.[342] Health office files also indicate mistrust and disdain by staff for their 'hwG' patients. When a welfare worker from the ZB attracted the attention of *BILD* newspaper in June 1966 for not informing a registered woman that her husband could face a *Kuppelei* prosecution, her colleague commiserated: 'Now you also have to deal with the "nice little girls" during your well-earned evening off!'[343] Heinz-Trossen later concluded that staff often found it difficult to relate to prostitute women, due to their different social backgrounds.[344]

Clinic notes from 1970 describe how the husband of a registered woman in Hamburg shouted at the officers who transported her to the clinic, calling one a 'Nazi pig'. He had reportedly previously referred to the system of registration and surveillance as 'Nazi stuff'.[345] Nevertheless, there are indications which suggest a more sympathetic relationship between registered women and clinic staff. In August 1970, such sympathies were given clear expression through a letter sent to Cologne's mayor, signed by women from Kleine Brinkgasse. They requested that a clinic staff member, who had treated them particularly kindly, be retained after reaching pensionable age. Notably, the staff member had worked at the clinic for over forty years, covering the entire period of

[340] Untitled, 28.01.1960, StHH, 351-10-II-2664.
[341] Kahmann/Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution*, 72.
[342] Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 186.
[343] Willers to Ernsting, 26.05.1966, 352-6-3999, StHH.
[344] Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 260.
[345] 'Vermerk', Willers, 27.05.1970, 352-6-5400, StHH.

Nazi rule.[346] In addition, the 1968 Hamburg open letter-writers positioned both staff and registered women as jointly affected by poor conditions and, however strategic such descriptions may have been, did not address the treatment by staff in the letter.[347]

Staff, particularly welfare workers, represented the link between VD clinics and the larger welfare system and could prove a first point of call. From around the 1970s, with the politicisation and professionalisation of the field of social work, welfare workers at the health offices became more likely to see mentoring and support work as part of their responsibilities.[348] In 1984, members of the prostitute self-help group Hydra emphasised their positive relationship with the social workers at the Berlin-Charlottenburg clinic:

> We consider the work of the Charlottenburg counselling centre to be positive, because the social workers have worked hard in recent years for positive changes in the interest of the prostitutes and have also fought that they themselves no longer have to act as a controlling body, but are active in an advisory capacity, more in line with the role of a social worker.[349]

Yet despite this development, some health office employees—primarily nurses and medical staff—continued to advocate for stricter, harsher punishments.[350] The centrality of staff-patient relationships to the experience of health office registration for registered women remains evident. By examining the staffing of this system, the impact of demographic shifts amongst welfare workers emerges.

Staff-patient confidentiality

Counselling centre staff typically dealt with numerous requests to disclose whether individuals were registered prostitutes. These requests illustrate both the shifting stance of the ZB, as well as providing insight into the far-reaching stigma or vulnerability that health office registration could entail.

The most significant branch of requests came from local institutions, in search of missing individuals. Local counselling centres so regularly shared information to trace 'hwG'-women who missed appointments that it became typical practice. Yet requests were not restricted to concerns as foreseen in the GBG. For instance, the Hamburg ZB files include numerous requests from Braunschweig in search of women who owed

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[346] 'Leichte Damen traten für Beamtin ein'.
[347] Anita S. to Seeler, 352-6-1221, StHH.
[348] Sabine Hering and Richard Münchmeier, *Geschichte der Sozialen Arbeit: eine Einführung* (Weinheim, 2014), 237, 241-243; Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 128.
[349] 'Der Staat & die Prostituierten', 56.
[350] Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 128.

money in child support.[351] In 1968 the Hamburg-Eimsbüttel district office enquired whether Annemarie M.* was known to the ZB as a prostitute, before issuing her bar an alcohol licence. When the ZB refused, the district office claimed that 'in the past, the central clinic has always willingly provided the information requested in cases of this kind'.[352] Indeed, when Hannover's public order office made a similar request, the ZB denied any record of the woman in question.[353] Nevertheless, despite apparent past cooperation and records which indicate that Annemarie had been registered in Hamburg and elsewhere, the ZB refused to disclose the relevant information. They cited the staff-patient confidentiality written into the GBG, which, other than rare exceptions, was to be protected. Importantly, they emphasised the role this confidentiality played in registering as many prostitutes as possible.[354]

Aside from requests by local administrative offices, the ZB received numerous letters regarding private legal cases. Most commonly these enquiries were made regarding divorce or child support cases, including former partners trying to prove they had not fathered a child.[355] Cases from the 1970s suggest that Hamburg's ZB now refused to share such information. In 1975, the health office's legal department reiterated its line clearly:

> the health office does not provide any information about the activities of the ZB beyond the scope prescribed by law, insofar as it relates to individual persons. […] in the interest of effectively combating VD, everything must be avoided that could be perceived as an additional burden on the persons served by the ZB.[356]

In a 1976 case, they clarified, 'the health authority is of the opinion that it is already not allowed to answer the question whether a file on a Ms. F. is kept at the ZB at all'.[357]

Private enquiries also took more personal forms. One 1972 Hamburg letter documents a son looking for news of his mother.[358] A 1965 letter stems from a husband, who writes 'I would like to have the question answered whether my wife was known to the city of Hamburg as a prostitute.'[359] Here, the health office responded and informed him his wife was not known to them.[360]

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[351] See: 352-6-5399, StHH.
[352] *Bezirksamt* Eimsbüttel to *Gesundheitsbehörde*, 11.03.1968, 352-6-4689, StHH.
[353] Hannover *Ordnungsamt* to *Gesundheitsbehörde*, 29.08.1967, 352-6-5400, StHH.
[354] *Rechtsdezernat* to *Bezirksamt* Eimsbüttel, 22.03.1968, 352-6-4689, StHH.
[355] Male defendants in paternity suits could avoid maintenance claims if they produced witnesses that the mother had pursued intimate relations with various men around the time of conception. On the 'Einrede des Mehrverkehrs': Buske, 'Fräulein Mutter', 52.
[356] *Rechtsdezernat*, 11.08.1975, 352-6-5399, StHH.
[357] *Rechtsdezernat*, 21.09.1976, 352-6-5399, StHH.
[358] C.G. letter, 22.12.1972, 352-6-5399, StHH.
[359] To *Gesundheitsbehörde*, received 16.08.1965, 352-6-5399, StHH.
[360] *Gesundheitsbehörde*, 25.08.1965, 352-6-5399, StHH.

The above letters suggest a change in how Hamburg's ZB responded to requests about registered women. From around 1968 staff generally refused to share such details, citing staff-patient confidentiality—and the text of the GBG itself—as imperative for the fight against VD. This change could be attributed to staff turnover, although Holtschmidt remained its director until 1977. It seems that Cologne and West Berlin health offices viewed their responsibility for confidentiality similarly.[361] Taken in unison, the above letters also illustrate the far-reaching stigma that could affect women known to sell sex, in their interactions with institutions and private individuals alike. Notably, the argumentation underpinning the ZB's new refusal to share details of health office registration rested on a public health calculation; they saw it as their role to avoid any consequences that would make 'hwG'-women less likely to register and undergo regular testing.

Categories of 'hwG'-persons

Within the ranks of registered 'hwG'-persons, various characteristics and categorisations affected their experiences of health office registration. Those who diverged from the expected model of the 'registered prostitute', such as trans* and gender non-conforming patients, underage, drug-using, non-white or non-German registered women, as well as men who sold sex, all interacted with the system of health office registration in varying ways. Their experiences of selling sex challenged assumptions on commercial sex and its practitioners, and their presence in the system, voluntary or not, illustrates the expectations that underpinned it.

Trans* and gender non-conforming patients

In 1970s Hamburg, several cases emerge of trans* and gender non-conforming prostitutes, referred to as 'transvestites', registered at the ZB.[362] This registration took place at their independent request, for they were typically seen by police and health office staff as men and were therefore not forcibly brought to the VD clinics. In 1973, for instance, Lilli* came to the ZB. She told staff that she had undergone sex

[361] 'Informationsaustausch zwischen Gesundheitsbehörden und Polizei', 13.02.1976, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW; 'Der Staat & die Prostituierten', 57; Grimm, 'Zum gegenwärtigen Stand', 7.

[362] I borrow the term 'trans*' as their gender identities are difficult to glean from health office documents: Jack Halberstam, *Trans*: A Quick and Quirky Account of Gender Variability* (Oakland, 2018); Adrian de Silva, *Negotiating the Borders of the Gender Regime. Developments and Debates on Trans(Sexuality) in the Federal Republic of Germany* (Bielefeld, 2018).

reassignment surgery in Casablanca and now wanted to earn her living through prostitution. After enquiries with the legal department, she was allowed to register and was told to come to the ZB for weekly examinations.[363] Although such voluntary registrations were not common, a 1977 note from the ZB states that the clinic allowed such registrations for 'transvestites' deemed to 'act like female prostitutes' and who had undergone gender affirming surgeries.[364] These cases are interesting in the voluntary nature of their registration and acquiescence to regular examinations. Perhaps they registered to receive a *Bockschein*, which would enable them to sell sex, able to present their proof of registration to police officers on demand. The insistence by the ZB that 'transvestite' applicants had undergone surgery to qualify for registration illustrates the interconnectedness of understandings of womanhood and the spread of VD and the clinic's role in their reinforcement.

Minors

In 1963, the director of Frankfurt's *Pflegeamt*, Luise Stetter, wrote that minors should not be allowed to undergo health office registration. She described any such registration as 'an admission of adult failure, an injustice to the young person who has a right to help—not to mention the recognition of an erroneous view and conduct of life'.[365] Nevertheless, although the system of registering 'hwG'-persons was primarily targeted at adult women, in each of the three cities examples of registered minors were flagged. Registration typically took place in correspondence with other departments such as the local youth and care offices, the work of the VD clinics tied up with the wider care system.

Hamburg's ZB typically registered adult prostitutes, as well as those it deemed 'of age' through marriage.[366] Before the border to East Germany was closed, clinic staff noted the problem of East German women who reached adulthood at 18 and therefore could no longer be required to acquiesce to 'care measures' from the side of the *Pflegeamt.* ZB files note that

> If these girls are also always already deep in prostitution and "there is nothing left to spoil about them", this registration remains an extremely unsatisfactory solution. If health surveillance is left to the *Beratungsstellen* of the health offices, […] it arouses

[363] Holtschmidt to Wilcke, 19.06.1973, 352-6-5400, StHH.
[364] 'Bemerkungen zu dem Vermerk von -400-', 18.03.1977, 352-6-4687, StHH.
[365] Stetter, 'Der fürsorgerische Auftrag in §14 GBG', 1963, Acc-672-A13, HAStK.
[366] 'Vermerk', 15.01.1965, 352-6-4689, StHH.

> the displeasure of prostitutes aged over 21 years of age, who see it as favoring those who, because of their youth, "spoil the business".[367]

Yet even after the border closure, exceptions were made for younger women, in correspondence with other departments. Often this was initiated by the registered woman herself. In 1968, for instance, some registered minors were flagged by the Hamburg youth office, their ages ranging from 17 to 19. A 1970 speech by a representative of Hamburg's *Pflegeamt* reported that from 1968 to 1970 the ZB had registered 311 minors, almost all of whom had previously been expelled from reformatories or similar.[368]

Margo H.*, aged 17 but married, was permitted to register at the ZB and work in the Eros-Center in 1970. Her registration was reported to the welfare and youth offices, which then brought forward a motion to bring Margo into the care system (*Fürsorgeerziehung*). In recognition that the court decision would take a while, the welfare office allowed her health office registration to go ahead in the meantime.[369] Similarly, when Renate L.*, aged 17, asked to register at the ZB in 1970, staff temporarily acquiesced. Renate had been in the care system, having previously lived in a reformatory. Now she was living in a hotel in Hamburg. In her case notes, Willers records informing the *Pflegeamt*, who planned to soon bring Renate back into care.[370]

The following year, 1971, Heidi A.* was registered at age 18. Staff noted:

> in recognition of the realities, Miss A., as an adolescent, had to be obliged to undergo regular examinations, because she could not be dissuaded from the decision to give up the lifestyle […], despite detailed consultation and explanation of the dangers involved.[371]

In this case, further involvement of other authorities is not clear, although the ZB likely communicated her registration. The ZB employed two welfare workers who worked with other departments to deter registered minors from selling sex. 'However, if these girls cannot be dissuaded from their intention, the health office considers regular health checks to be necessary, also in the girls' own interests.'[372] The above cases illustrate clearly the links to the wider care system and to the reformatories. This was similar at Cologne's *Sichtungsstelle* until its closure, which explicitly reserved beds for the under 21s, and where staff worked directly with the youth and care offices to process cases. In January 1975, the age of majority was lowered from 21 to 18.

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[367] ZB to '2076', 15.07.1955, StHH, 352-6-1992, StHH.
[368] 'Aus der Arbeit des Pflegeamtes in Hamburg', 5, StHH, 351-10-II-2664.
[369] Willers, 'Vermerk', 20.05.1970, 352-6-5399, StHH.
[370] 'Vermerk', 26.08.1970, 352-6-5399, StHH.
[371] *Leitender Medizinaldirektor*, 19.04.1971, 352-6-5399, StHH.
[372] Elsner, 10.04.1974, 352-6-5399, StHH.

In 1978, the *Berliner Zeitung* reported that, in the previous two years, 55 girls and boys under the age of 18 sold sex and were registered at the health office, 8 of whom were under the age of 16. This was in relation to the 3844 registered prostitutes in West Berlin in 1977. Berlin's Family Senator Ilse Reichel posited that the number of registered underage prostitutes was significantly lower than the presumed total, of whom many were young drug users, who sold sex to fund their habit.[373] Underage prostitutes, who were not necessarily registered at the health office, were also to be found on the closed VD wards. West Berlin's *Tagesspiegel*, for instance, reported in 1978 that the ages of inmates of the closed hospital VD wards started at 13 or 14.[374]

Drug-users

The 1960s and 1970s saw multiple waves of drug use in West Germany. Hamburg, at the crossroads of various drug distribution networks, was often early to see shifts in drug use amongst West Germans. Even in the period of generally low drug use prior to 1964, historian Robert Stephens identifies that Hamburg records show a higher than average, if still small, number of drug addicts.[375] In the mid-1960s, authorities in Hamburg began to first perceive a rapid rise in drug use, although recollections of St. Pauli's local music scene suggest that this had previously been going on largely undetected by local authorities.[376] The new 'wave' in drug consumption concentrated particularly around speed, which could either be procured in form of over-the-counter diet pills or prescription drugs such as Preludin (the German term for the amphetamine phenmetrazine). Women who sold sex in St. Pauli made up a central customer base for these drugs, although Hamburg's vice police also reported the involvement of prostitutes in both the sale and the consumption of Preludin in the period.[377]

The scale of amphetamine use amongst women who sold sex is difficult to assess, particularly as overwhelmed police placed other priorities in their attempts to tackle the rapid rise in drug use in the district.[378] Over course of 1970s, however, heroin began to replace pharmaceutical drugs in the West German drug scene, and this significant shift would reshape the popular link between commercial sex and drug

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[373] 'Liebesmädchen, die jünger als 16 sind', *BZ*, A-Rep-400-BRD-2.15-(1), FFBiZ.
[374] 'Zum Arzt'.
[375] Stephens, *Germans on Drugs*, 8, 37.
[376] Ibid., 46; Sneeringer, *A Social History*, 129; Ariane Barth, *Reeperbahn: Der Kampf um Hamburgs sündige Meile* (Hamburg, 1999), 101.
[377] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1963-1967, 331-1II-2680, StHH; Stephens, *Germans on Drugs*, 64.
[378] Ibid., 67.

use.[379] It is unclear how far VD clinics encountered an uptick in drug-using prostitutes registering in the late 1970s. In a sociological study undertaken in Hamburg in mid-1970s, based on interviews with the vice police and access to ZB patient files, drug use amongst women who sell sex rarely features. When it does, it is compared to the use of alcohol to tackle the strain of work.[380] Recounting interviews with registered women, the researchers stated that

> some of the women interviewed admitted that they occasionally take some kind of drugs, but denied being addicted. Several prostitutes were observed to be obviously prone to some alcohol dependence.[381]

Here, the picture emerges of a small group of registered women with drug and alcohol dependencies, at a level which does not appear to have significantly impacted the work of the ZB. This echoes other references to women who sold sex using drugs including alcohol to manage their work from across the period and complicates common understandings of a hard boundary between professional prostitution and 'drug prostitution'.[382] Berlin Family Senator Ilse Reichel's suggestion in 1978 that the number of minors who sold sex to fund their habit registering at the health office was comparably low, likely was reflected in cities across Germany.[383] In the mid-1980s, despite the 'rapid growth' in drug-using prostitutes, there remained hardly any noted heroin-users registered at Hamburg's ZB.[384]

Although records from Hamburg's ZB identify a small minority of registered women as known drug-users, this does not emerge as a larger concern of work at the clinic, and is simply noted on patient files.[385] Perhaps this can be attributed to the range of institutions in Hamburg with responsibilities for dealing with drug use and abuse, including the youth authority, the interior ministry (including the police), the authority for work and social welfare, the school authority (in the context of its antidrug education programme) and the health authority (responsible for hospital-based treatments, as well as the control of pharmacies and physicians).[386] If registered women

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[379] Ibid., 104.
[380] Kahmann/Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution*, 82.
[381] Ibid., 91.
[382] Heike Zurhold, 'Drogenprostitution zwischen Armut, Zwang und Illegalität', in *Sexarbeit: Prostitution - Lebenswelten und Mythen*, ed. Elisabeth von Dücker and Hamburg Museum der Arbeit (Bremen, 2005), 142.
[383] 'Liebesmädchen, die jünger als 16 sind', A-Rep-400-BRD-2.15-(1), FFBiZ.
[384] 'Geprüftes Frischfleisch', *Der Spiegel*, 29.12.1991.
[385] See: 352-6-5400, StHH.
[386] Stephens, *Germans on Drugs*, 125.

presented with more obvious signs of drug dependency that impeded the work of the ZB, they were likely entrusted to a separate institution.

Numerous contemporary sources suggest a level of rivalry between women who sold sex and their drug-using colleagues, who were deemed more likely to break generally accepted rules on prices and practices (such as the use of condoms).[387] In such descriptions, heroin users were often viewed as a separate group to 'professional' prostitutes. This perception, when coupled with understaffed and overworked health office staff, likely meant that heroin users, particularly if they were also minors, were not incorporated into the system of health office registration. Their status as both prostitutes and illegal drug users also gave them more reason to evade institutional interventions, including the health office clinics.[388] Heroin users therefore presumably made up only a small minority of registered women.

Non-white and non-German women

In 1960s West Germany, registered 'hwG'-women were primarily white German nationals, as were most women who sold sex in Hamburg, Cologne and West Berlin. With increased immigration in the late 1970s, the numbers of registered women who did not have German citizenship and/or were women of colour also grew. In Cologne, visa requirements meant they were more likely to do so in the registered houses and thus were compelled to the regular examinations. Surviving case files from Cologne's health office show women born in Martinique, Guadaloupe, and the Congo living in the city's *Eros-Center*.[389]

In Hamburg, which did not give visas to women who sold sex, police officers used the *Bockscheine* as evidence to initiate the deportation process for non-German women caught selling sex.[390] Until a law change in January 2016, discretionary deportations of non-German women, including EU citizens, convicted on *Sperrbezirk* violations remained possible.[391]

Whether migrant women were registered at the health offices depended on local practice at the counselling centres, and their commitment to staff-patient confidentiality.

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[387] 'Handfeste Revierkämpfe im ältesten Gewerbe vor Gericht verhandelt', *Tagesspiegel,* 13.03.81. See also: Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 214.
[388] Ibid., 215.
[389] See individual cases: Acc-1647-A12, HAStK.
[390] Beeck to *Gesundheitsbehörde,* 06.05.1974, 136-1-2612, StHH.
[391] Jenny Künkel, *Sex, Drugs & Control: Das Regieren von Sexarbeit in der neoliberalen Stadt* (Münster, 2020), 169.

In 1968 Hamburg's police noted that the ZB refused to disclose information regarding migrant prostitutes due to the GBG's confidentiality clause.[392] When the Interior Ministry challenged this legally, however, the ZB agreed to pass on information regarding individual visas.[393] When prostitute self-help group Hydra looked to investigate the registration of migrant women in the early 1980s, they found that counselling centres in Berlin, Bremen and Stuttgart looked to uphold confidentiality and register migrant women who sold sex.[394] In Hamburg, the group found that women from the European Community were 'tolerated', while 'others work privately and do not go for inspection.'[395] Throughout the period, many migrant women were presumably able to evade health office registration altogether.

Men

In their implementation of the GBG, health offices overwhelmingly focused on women deemed to be 'hwG'-persons. Whilst women who sold sex were required to undergo regular VD testing, their clients were under no such demand. West Germany was also later than other European nations to associate men who had sex with men as conduits of infection.[396] This association was absent when health office registration was re-introduced in 1953 and remained so after the decriminalisation of sex between men in 1969.[397] Despite the gender neutrality of the text of the GBG, local VD clinics overwhelmingly continued to focus on female prostitutes and 'hwG'-women. Hamburg's health authority recognised this fact in 1977 when they noted,

> male prostitutes are only present in small numbers and […] the sexual practices they engage in do not pose any significant threat to public safety. In addition, the structure of the ZB, which is entirely geared towards female prostitutes, would have had to be changed considerably.[398]

Nevertheless, in 1970s West Berlin, the counselling centres began registering men who sold sex. In 1978, there were more than 3800 female and male prostitutes registered in West Berlin, although these two groups are not listed separately. In the previous year 2498 women and 1346 men were required to attend clinics either weekly

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[392] 'Ausländische Prostituierte', 02.01.1968, 136-1-2612, StHH.
[393] 'Ausländische Prostituierte', *Gesundheitsbehörde* to *Behörde für Inneres*, 05.04.1968, 136-1-2612, StHH.
[394] 'Der Staat & die Prostituierten', 66.
[395] Ibid., 66.
[396] Lindner, *Gesundheitspolitik*, 371.
[397] The age of consent was not equalised until 1994.
[398] 'Entwurf einer Senatsdrucksache, Veränderung der Aufgabenstellung der ZB', 14.10.1977, 352-6-4687, StHH.

or fortnightly.[399] Yet presumptions on male infectiousness (and the visibility of VD) remained influential. In 1984 at the Charlottenburg-*Beratungsstelle* for instance, whilst female prostitutes were instructed to attend examinations fortnightly, male prostitutes only had to attend every four weeks.[400]

Change in West Berlin was not reflected across West Germany. By 1990, although some health offices had begun registering men who sold sex, they continued to do so at far lower rates. A survey of 86 health offices in 1990 found only 162 male prostitutes registered, compared to a total of 9,961 female prostitutes.[401] The primary association of women who sold sex with the spread of VD remained strong.

Conclusions

Although the practice of health office registration survived the period under consideration and continued to form an important institutional component of the management of sexual labour, it is possible to identify some changing tendencies. By the end of the 1970s, local police and health offices had less power to hold women against their will. This was most evident in the case of Cologne's *Sichtungsstelle*, which ceased in the early 1960s to forcibly hold adult women and eventually closed in 1969. Many of the more repressive practices were also curbed. Regular patrols were now often carried out by welfare workers, whilst those unwilling to attend examinations could only be transported by police after a request specific to their particular case.[402] The increased bureaucracy served to further reduce police power to act against women who sold sex. As the following chapters will illustrate, police departments were instead widely given new powers of arrest over women who sold sex in the city, separate to the GBG.[403] Yet overall, the system of health office surveillance, including the use of coercive measures against women deemed by others to be prostitutes or 'hwG'-persons, remained largely intact across the country.

Health office registration was not regulation in the traditional sense. Unlike typical cases in prostitution historiography, the responsibility for monitoring women who sold sex rested with the health offices. Therefore, registration as a 'hwG'-person did not, as some historians of regulation have found, cement prostitution as legal or

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[399] 'Zum Arzt'.
[400] 'Der Staat & die Prostituierten', 55.
[401] Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 115.
[402] 'Zum Arzt'.
[403] 'Betr: §19 RGBG v.23.7.53', 08.06.1956; 'Zuführung von geschlechtskranken Personen', 16.06.1967 both 352-6-5047, StHH.

occupational identity.[404] The muddiness of the 'hwG' term, at the very least, ensured that any identity of the 'prostitute' remained contentious. Nevertheless, the comparison with earlier regulation remains fruitful, particularly when considering the impact of the forced registration and record-keeping of women who sold sex, or indeed, regulation's expression of a wider gender order.[405] Additionally, as historians of Russia, Austro-Hungary or the German empire have illustrated, regulation often worked outside of the law, with commercial sex remaining officially illegal.[406] Even when policing was gradually legally uncoupled from the medicalised system of surveillance in place in West Germany, the GBG's continued reliance on coercion—which often did include police involvement—remains evident. Acknowledging the often-complex legal foundation to regulation in numerous historical settings makes it possible to view the implementation of West Germany's GBG alongside these earlier systems. It also illustrates that 'regulation' itself has remained imprecise both as a term and as a system for managing commercial sex.

Changes to health office registration happened slowly. Although police aid with patrols was restricted significantly in West Berlin in 1959, and in NRW soon after, cooperation between police departments and VD clinics continued throughout the period in each of the three cities. Health office case files from Cologne in 1985 indicate the continued involvement of vice police officers in the search for 'hwG'-women.[407] Furthermore, even when repressive measures were used less frequently, the legal possibility to use force could still be used as a threat by health office staff in their interactions with women who sold sex.[408] When, in 1976, Hamburg's health authority suggested bringing the GBG into the Federal Epidemics Act (*Bundes-Seuchengesetz*) and removing the forced treatments that the GBG entailed, they received positive responses from the Federal Ministry for Youth, Family and Health as well as amongst some other federal states.[409] Yet legal change of such a dramatic nature would take time and the GBG remained in place in Germany until 2001.[410]

Generally, the health office registration of women who sold sex did not garner larger interest over the period. With the 1953 GBG, West German lawmakers had

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[404] Hearne, *Policing Prostitution*, 5.
[405] Bernstein, *Sonia's Daughters*, 3.
[406] Ibid., 29; Roos, *Weimar through the Lens*; Wingfield, *World of Prostitution*.
[407] See: Acc-1647-A14, HAStK.
[408] See: Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 169.
[409] 'Entwurf IX/77 einer Deputationsvorlage', 352-6-4687, StHH; Kreuzer, *Prostitution*, 56.
[410] Lindner, *Gesundheitspolitik*, 369.

largely re-installed the Weimar system, leaving many of the criticisms of the period unsolved.[411] Despite that, the system was not fundamentally reformed in the subsequent decades. Registration may have built one of the central measures implemented against women who sold sex, yet local counselling centres typically operated with significant funding problems, both under-staffed and overwhelmed by the resulting bureaucracy, unable to come close to their remit of regularly examining all women who sold sex in the local area.

On the ground, change could be and was often instead linked to individual biographies. Personnel continuities as well as continuities in terminology and practice from the Weimar and Nazi periods likely waned as staff grew older and left the clinics. At Hamburg's ZB, attempts for a reform of clinic culture and practices coincided with Holtschmidt's retirement. Suggestions were made to turn the registration of prostitutes to a voluntary system, which could also involve treatment by private doctors. Although Holtschmidt was willing to consider allowing the involvement of private doctors once again, she opposed ending the forced registration of women who sold sex and a turn towards voluntary examinations.[412] A later assessment found her to have a 'conservative attitude', that she did not want to change the system at all, apart from perhaps making stricter measures to include men who sold sex and those who sold sex in massage parlours.[413] Representatives from the health authority wanted to make the ZB, the central counselling centre, live up to its name, to offer registered women an 'expert and specialised point of contact', and simultaneously remove the system of alerts and patrols. They recognised that the repressive measures in place were disproportionate to the threat of VD, now easily cured.[414] Notwithstanding attempts from Hamburg to act both at federal and local level, such changes dragged. Despite some liberalisations after Holtschmidt's departure, Hamburg only removed the forced examinations at the local level in 1987 at the height of the AIDS epidemic.[415]

The registration of women who sold sex and so-called 'hwG'-persons at the *Beratungsstellen* continued throughout the 1960s and 1970s. The clinics responsible for monitoring registered women both tested for and treated certain venereal diseases, but also exercised surveillance and control over the women they registered. In fact,

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[411] On Weimar criticisms: Roos, 'Backlash'.
[412] 'Besprechung mit Holtschmidt', 04.07.1977, 352-6-4687, StHH.
[413] 'Entwurf einer Senatsdrucksache', 24.11.1977, 352-6-4687, StHH.
[414] 'Entwurf IX/77 einer Deputationsvorlage', 352-6-4687, StHH.
[415] Freund-Widder, *Frauen unter Kontrolle*, 235; Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 137.

focussing on the system of health office registration highlights that the nominal gender equality enshrined in the West German constitution was limited and that expectations of traditional gender roles of the breadwinner-husband and housewife model persevered. The gendered implementation of a gender-neutral law, the use of the 'hwG' descriptor to refer to promiscuous women and the many ways in which expectations of femininity and motherhood were played out in interactions with social workers and health office staff all illustrate the importance of gender roles in the monitoring of VD and prostitution. Women who sold sex defied expectations of femininity and motherhood, yet further factors—including poverty, family or immigration status—placed some women at a particular disadvantage in their interactions with institutional representatives carrying out the GBG, be that police officers, social workers or medical staff.

Various factors, most notably their level of income, affected women's ability to negotiate or resist measures placed upon them, or indeed their experience of the measures themselves, yet a repressive tendency continued throughout the period. Importantly, the developments considered within this chapter took place in a time in which the VDs being monitored were easily curable with antibiotics. The interpretation of women who sold sex as vectors of infection into the heterosexual population would come to affect the treatment of women who sold sex in the following years, revived in the face of the spread of HIV/AIDs in West Germany in the 1980s.

3. Work

> I'm lucky, my mum and my sisters don't live in Hamburg, thank God. For them, I'm still a secretary, that's what I pretend to them. I don't know why. I'm afraid they'd get a shock if they knew. Or they won't like me anymore, and think I'm disgusting or something.[416]

In conversation with four other women who sold sex, Pat reflected in 1980 on the stigma surrounding her work as a call-girl in Hamburg. When considering possible reactions from her family members if they discovered her involvement in commercial sex, Pat recognised her mother's past engagement with practices of sexual barter in the immediate post-war period: 'I don't know if my mum would understand, even though she herself—but that was different, that was after the war, where there was nothing'.[417] Pat relativized her mother's relationships with men, often French soldiers who brought food, chocolate and 'all sorts of great things', by referencing the context of post-war scarcities and uncertainty, exceptional circumstances not present when she moved to supporting herself through sexual labour. Citing these differences, she chose to keep her call-girl work hidden from her mother and sisters.[418]

It is often argued that the widespread adoption of sexual barter for supplies including cigarettes and food, referred to by contemporaries as 'hunger prostitution', was largely accepted in practice pre-1948, whilst turning to sexual labour after this period was cited as proof of an individual's moral failing.[419] Pat's mother likely still suffered stigma for her 'fraternisation' with former enemy forces, particularly from welfare workers who, as Freund-Widder has documented, described women who had transactional sex with soldiers as the 'least valuable part of the female population'.[420] Nevertheless, it is easy to see how sexual barter could be explained and justified to contemporaries by the chaos, upheaval and suffering that followed the Second World War, if only retrospectively. The circumstances of the immediate post-war years —hunger, homelessness, and mass migration—soon became a feature of collective memory. When, with the currency reform of 1948 and the subsequent economic

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[416] Biermann, *Wir sind Frauen!*, 117. I have taken over the pseudonyms used in the published work.
[417] Ibid., 117–18.
[418] Ibid., 23.
[419] See: Heide Fehrenbach, 'Of German Mothers and "Negermischlingskinder": Race, Sex, and the Postwar Nation', in *Miracle Years*, ed. Schissler, 169; Freund, Michaela, 'Women, Venereal Disease and the Control of Female Sexuality in Post-War Hamburg', in *Sex, Sin and Suffering: Venereal Disease and European Society since 1870*, ed. Roger Davidson and Lesley Hall (London/New York, 2001), 206.
[420] Freund, Michaela, 'Women, Venereal Disease', 207.

upswing felt in the Western zones and early years of the Federal Republic, these circumstances were ostensibly overcome, this justification for engaging in sexual labour disappeared alongside them.[421]

Even though the extreme conditions of the initial post-war period subsided after the currency reform, many women continued to or began to sell sex in West Germany throughout the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s and beyond. This often confused members of the institutions responsible for dealing with women who sold sex. Welfare worker Luise Stetter, later head of the Frankfurt *Pflegeamt*, described in a lecture on 'vulnerable' women in October 1959:

> The economic situation changed after 1948. No one has to give themselves away for cigarettes, nylons or anything else. A considerable percentage […] have fortunately found their way back into the order of their social class.
> But it is incomprehensible that, despite the secure economic conditions, the high wages, the demand for labour of all kinds, prostitution is growing in all circles in the most diverse forms.[422]

A draft response to a UN questionnaire on human trafficking and prostitution in 1957 read similarly:

> Some prostitutes fell into prostitution due to the economic plight of the post-war years and now they can't adjust to a decent life anymore. In the Federal Republic, economic hardship as such is no motive for the decision to surrender to prostitution, since casual work is available everywhere with reasonable pay.[423]

This draft was based on responses from each of the individual federal states, who in turn constructed their answers through the replies from police and health offices in the constituent towns and cities. Representatives from these institutions failed to grasp the circumstances that led women to sell sex in West Germany. They also resolutely did not acknowledge women's involvement in sexual labour as participation in work, often reverting to assumptions regarding an individual's 'character' or immorality. These ideas were not new but continued to hold sway both in Germany and beyond. Although West Germany never ratified the UN Convention of 1949, this defined prostitution as 'incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person', providing an international framework for pathologising commercial sex as immoral and degrading.[424]

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[421] Heineman, *What Difference?*, 99; Fehrenbach, 'From Starvation to Excess?', 169.
[422] Acc-734-A68, HAStK, 7.
[423] *Anlage zu VIB4-61041A-418/57*, 27.09.1957, B-106-17303, BArch.
[424] Laite, *Common Prostitutes*, 197. On the 1949 convention, see: Sonja Dolinsek, 'Tensions of Abolitionism during the Negotiation of the 1949 "Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others"', *ERH*, 29/2 (2022), 223–48; Dolinsek, 'Kein Mädchenhandel mehr', 385–416.

This chapter shifts the perspective away from institutional interventions in the name of public health. It turns instead to the many women who engaged in sexual labour, despite changing legal frameworks or varying police or medical intervention. They did so out of various motivations and under hugely differing circumstances. The forms of sexual labour they chose or had available to them depended on numerous factors, divergent according to time and place, but also on their own personal biographies, variables such as class or immigration status, as well as the impact of changing measures to control commercial sex. The chapter teases out the diverse settings and circumstances in which women sold sex, and sets them against the continued pathologisation of prostitution as 'work-shy' or 'wayward' behaviour. This diversity of experiences is central to the following exploration, and illustrates clearly that it is not possible to speak of one prostitute experience or 'the prostitute voice'.

Working women

When, in 1959, Luise Stetter described women turning to commercial sex as 'incomprehensible', she cited supposed 'secure economic conditions, the high wages, the demand for labour of all kinds'. In this, Stetter echoed assumptions evident both in Germany and elsewhere that, after the war and with the advent of the welfare state, comprehensible reasons for selling sex had been eliminated. Laite has identified a similar shift in the 1957 Wolfenden Report in Britain; the committee's findings—based on their belief in a demographic and psychological shift amongst women choosing to sell sex—'built upon naïve post-war understandings of the successes of the welfare economy and a profound ignorance of women's economic position and the demands of childcare'.[425] British politicians asserted that prostitutes were professionals out 'to make a far greater living than do those who do an honest day's work'.[426]

In West Germany, Stetter and others failed to acknowledge the continued demands on women, or indeed, the contradictory place occupied by women's paid employment in West German society. Economic conditions were not as secure as they seemed; women's wages were much lower than for their male counterparts and demand for labour was limited in scope. The need for women's labour may have been acknowledged in the immediate post-war years, in the context of the in large parts absent or deceased male population, yet in the conservative society of 1950s West

[425] Laite, *Common Prostitutes*, 197.
[426] R.A. Butler quoted in Laite, *Common Prostitutes*, 200.

Germany women were once again unwelcome in the workplace. Basic Law had enshrined equality of the sexes as a central value of the new state and yet the precise meaning of *equality* remained disputed. The Federal Republic's 1957 law on the equality of men and women wrote the breadwinner-husband and housewife-mother model into law.[427] Women were thus expected to prioritise domestic and reproductive labour over participation in salaried labour outside of the home.

With the 'economic miracle' of the 1950s, public acknowledgement of widespread existential need subsided. Economic growth obscured hidden poverty or persisting vulnerabilities. Particularly those who deviated from expected norms, such as single mothers who could not fulfil the model of breadwinner-husband and housewife-mother, were for a long time overlooked.[428] Many positions did not offer social insurance contributions, assuming that women would be insured in the health and pension plans of their partners.[429] Well into the 1960s, the debates surrounding West German family policy largely ignored the poverty risk faced by wives and mothers in favour of state attempts to stabilise indirect insurance via husbands and thus strengthen the family as institution.[430] For those engaged in household work and child-rearing, a relationship failing could lead them to fall through the gaps of state welfare. As historian Christiane Kuller writes, 'as soon as the private regime of maintenance fails, those individuals engaged in the home are threatened with poverty, as they generally cannot provide for themselves by salaried labour, and, according to the gender norms dominant until the late 1960s, they should not do so'.[431] Even with a greater acceptance of women's part-time engagement in paid labour, West Germany's social security system, based on the principle of tying insurances—health, unemployment and pensions—strictly to employment, was upheld throughout the period.[432]

Women who did engage in salaried labour were largely restricted by a labour market segregated along gender lines. The West German economic boom included significant inequalities in wealth distribution for, as Arnold Sywottek identifies, male

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[427] Hanna Schissler, '"Normalization" as Project: Some Thoughts on Gender Relations in West Germany during the 1950s', in Schissler, *Miracle Years*, 363.
[428] See: Buske, 'Fräulein Mutter', 48–67.
[429] Christine von Oertzen, *The Pleasure of a Surplus Income: Part-Time Work, Gender Politics, & Social Change in West Germany, 1955-1969* (New York/London, 2007), 7.
[430] Kuller, 'Who Cares?', 172.
[431] Ibid., 173.
[432] von Oertzen, *Pleasure of a Surplus Income*, 204.

workers were the main winners of the industrialisation push.[433] While the numbers of women in paid employment were gradually increasing, the authorities did not want women in 'men's work'.[434] Instead, the 1950s saw a steady rise in women working in 'women's industries'— textiles industries, leather-working, clothing, food processing, retail sales and commerce—with industries deemed female consistently lower valued. Regardless of sector, women's wages were perpetually below men's.[435]

Circumstances also combined to make women more vulnerable in the workplace. Working mothers had to juggle childcare with employment, whilst often facing societal disapproval for working in the first place. Contemporary observers were alarmed by working mothers with children under age fourteen, often without consideration for the circumstances which might lead them to enter paid employment.[436] The post-war period had seen a notable increase in family constellations deemed 'not normal', such as single mothers or families with husbands unable to work, yet provisions for such constellations remained scarce.[437] The vulnerability of female salaried workers continued throughout the period, with Pieke Biermann, West German journalist, translator and sex worker activist, assessing in 1980: '[women] are more likely to be fired, they're the same kind of reserve army as the foreigners'.[438]

Rather than strengthening women's access to the workforce, West German policy makers from the 1950s onwards—faced with a clear need for labour—looked beyond the country's borders for new, primarily male, foreign workers. From 1955 to 1973, West Germany signed a number of labour recruitment agreements with other states. These agreements brought about a mass migration, first from southern and south-eastern Europe and later Turkey. [439] The central principle of these agreements, it has been argued, was the formation of an 'underclass' of unskilled foreign workers, believed to be highly mobile and flexible, with lower levels of consumption.[440] Their

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[433] Arnold Sywottek, 'From Starvation to Excess? Trends in the Consumer Society from the 1940s to the 1970s', in *Schissler, Miracle Years*, 342; Schissler, '"Normalization" as Project', 365.
[434] Moeller, *Protecting Motherhood*, 148.
[435] Ibid., 151–52.
[436] Ibid., 151.
[437] See: Anna Schnädelbach, *Kriegerwitwen: Lebensbewältigung zwischen Arbeit und Familie in Westdeutschland nach 1945* (Frankfurt/Main, 2009).
[438] Biermann, *Wir sind Frauen!*, 153.
[439] Dietmar/Jung, *Köln*, 454-455; Eckart Klessmann, *Geschichte der Stadt Hamburg* (Hamburg, 1981), 610.
[440] Ulrich Herbert and Karin Hunn, 'Guest Workers and Policy on Guest Workers in the Federal Republic: From the Beginning of Recruitment in 1955 until Its Halt in 1973', in Schissler, *Miracle Years*, 189.

migration was, crucially, taken to be of a temporary nature, indicative in the term 'guest worker' used widely from the 1960s onwards.[441] The possibility that they would settle, bring over families or form new ones on German soil was 'openly rejected'.[442] The recruited labourers were primarily young unmarried men, often housed in poor quality mass dormitories, segregated from the remaining population.[443]

Although male 'guest workers' made up the majority of those recruited through the bi-lateral agreements, female 'guest workers' were recruited to take on lower-paid 'women's waged' roles, primarily in industry. As Monika Mattes argues, the state followed a double strategy in the 1960s, both recruiting foreign female workers, and using part-time roles to recruit unemployed German wives and mothers, who were seen as working for inner enrichment and a little pocket money. These roles were remunerated the least and, importantly, proved the easiest to quietly and flexibly cut in a crisis.[444]

Despite 'economic miracle' and welfare state, it thus remained possible for many to fall through the gaps of state provision. Women both in and out of paid employment were particularly vulnerable. Even if not facing poverty, paid work remained limited both in scope and remuneration for women, 'guest workers', and those who straddled both categories. When economic crisis hit in 1973, underlying inequalities would become more visible. Throughout the period, many women looked outside of ostensibly licit industries for work and turned instead to selling sex to provide or supplement their income.

Selling sex

When women turned to commercial sex, they did so out of varying motivations. Many sold sex occasionally to supplement the family finances when circumstances required.[445] In the early 1960s, contemporaries deemed this to be the most common

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[441] The term was first implemented to differentiate from the historically-loaded term 'Fremdarbeiter' (foreign worker) often used to refer to the 'guest worker' migrants in the 1950s, yet 'guest worker' itself developed into a pejorative term. Hunn, *Nächstes Jahr*, 9.

[442] Cornelia Wilhelm, 'Introduction: Migration, Memory, and Diversity in Germany after 1945', in *Migration, Memory, and Diversity: Germany from 1945 to the Present*, ed. Cornelia Wilhelm (New York/Oxford, 2017), 2.

[443] Asiye Kaya, 'Inclusion and Exclusion of Immigrants and the Politics of Labeling: Thinking Beyond "Guest Workers," "Ethnic German Resettlers," "Refugees of the European Crisis," and "Poverty Migration"', in *Migration, Memory, and Diversity*, ed. Wilhelm, 62.

[444] Mattes, 'Migration und Geschlecht', 19–28.

[445] 'Bericht über die Prostitution', B-Rep-002-6688, LAB. Authorities often referred to this as 'situational prostitution' (*Gelegenheitsprostitution*).

form of commercial sex.[446] Choosing to sell sex did not always stem from acute economic need, however. Pat, who described hiding her work from her family, remembered her progression from secretary to call-girl work as gradual. She had previously engaged in sexual relationships which had involved gift-giving on the side of her partners. Whilst these gifts were initially chosen by the gift-givers in question, Pat had slowly began to request particular items or later money, rather than gifts she had no particular use for.[447] When she began to pursue commercial sex full-time, it was the freedom she felt it entailed, freedom, in part, from exploitation by her difficult boss, that she credited with leading her to quit her secretarial job.[448]

Whilst some women worked alone, some worked with or around others also involved in the sex industry. Their independence, the spaces they worked in, the services they offered and the remuneration they received varied greatly according to time and location. How and where they sold sex proved an important choice in determining the forms of their sexual labour, as well as the level of oversight from the state and from local authorities. Often, they paid tax, as income from commercial sex became liable to taxation from 1964 onwards. Despite in many ways conforming to this widespread understanding of work, however, women who sold sex remained excluded from the structures of the welfare state, for any taxes paid were classified as income from 'other revenues'.[449]

In the following section I turn to the most common forms in which women sold sex in Hamburg, Cologne and West Berlin, to explore the choices women made in *how* and *where* they sold sex, weighing up competing advantages and disadvantages with the aim of supporting themselves and their dependents financially. Considerations of class or immigration status could play a decisive role in determining the forms and spaces of sexual labour. Exploitation or bad workplace conditions did not distinguish selling sex from other forms of women's labour or paid labour more generally. I therefore consider this evidence alongside and as part of women's choices for or against different forms of sexual labour.

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[446] Achim Teuber, *Über den charaktertypologischen Wandel der Prostitution* (Frankfurt/Main, 1963), 90.
[447] This is reminiscent of the practice referred to as 'charity', the exchange of sex for gifts, distinguished from prostitution by its practitioners. Clement, 'Prostitution', 211.
[448] Biermann, *Wir sind Frauen!*, 30–31.
[449] Heying, *Huren in Bewegung*, 34.

Street-based commercial sex

All three cities had a significant number of women who sold sex on the street, although the concentrations of street prostitution changed over the years, largely in response to police regulations and patrols. In West Berlin street-based work was repeatedly cited as the most common form of commercial sex, primarily found in the Schöneberg, Tiergarten and Charlottenburg districts, near shopping streets with pedestrians.[450] Before the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961, women from East Germany crossed the border daily to sell sex on streets of West Berlin, where they could benefit from the stronger West German currency.[451] Nikolaos Papadogiannis has recently explored how Greek trans women sold sex primarily around West Berlin's Potsdamer Straße.[452]

Luise White, in her study of Nairobi, argued that it is important to draw out the specific advantages and financial rewards that streetwalking offered women, such as the greater control over customers, the minimised labour time and, perhaps, increased safety over private rooms.[453] Indeed, selling sex on the street proved popular for various cohorts in West Germany: for both younger and older women, women who sold sex professionally as well as those who did so occasionally, for instance to fund a drug dependency. Women who sold sex on the streets typically emphasised the freedoms of street-based work— the freedom to go home when they wanted, as well as the freedom not to drink alcohol with clients—more precisely, that they could 'be [their] own boss'.[454]

Women sold sex on the streets in West Germany despite numerous developments, both in the technologies available to them and their clients, and in the powers of arrest accorded to local police. Perhaps the most significant change in street prostitution was the involvement of cars, as both vehicle for transportation and site of the sex acts themselves. Primarily, clients used their cars to meet women but, in the 1950s and 1960, a significant cohort of West German women sold sex from their own cars. Frankfurt's health office assessed in 1962 that around 90 women sold sex from their cars, although this was decreasing with stricter controls.[455] Women including

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[450] 'Bericht über die Prostitution', B-Rep-002-6688, LAB; Grimm, 'Zum gegenwärtigen Stand', 6.

[451] Ibid., 5; Brüning, *Prostitution in der DDR*, 92.

[452] Nikolaos Papadogiannis, 'Greek Trans Women Selling Sex, Spaces and Mobilities, 1960s–80s', *ERH*, 29/2 (2022), 348.

[453] White, *Comforts of Home*, 14.

[454] Biermann, *Wir sind Frauen!*, 52; Sylvia, 'Ich bin mein eigener Chef', in *Sexarbeit*, ed. von Dücker/Hamburg Museum der Arbeit, 104–6.

[455] Teuber, *Über den charaktertypologischen Wandel*, 86.

Rosemarie Nitribitt—Frankfurt's most famous luxury call-girl—drove in search of clients from behind the wheel of their own car. Yet, over the course of the 1960s, as cars became more affordable and less exclusive, this form of sexual labour dwindled.[456] In the mid to late 1970s, hardly any prostitute women in Hamburg solicited from their own cars.[457]

Instead, many stood on the street to sell sex. Often, they stood at a fixed spot enabling them to develop regular clients. Although street prostitution is often assumed to be lower paid than other forms, significant price differences could reflect the demands of the interaction. Time spent with the client or the levels of undress or intimacy all played a role. Generally, understandings of prices and services were agreed amongst women selling sex and spatially located, with the reputation of certain streets determining the parameters.[458] This is clear in local guidebooks on the sex industry 'for men'. In the case of West Berlin, a guide wrote of the Tiergarten area that 'for 20 marks those in a hurry are offered quick love without any wardrobe changes, only a car is required' whilst on the city's famous Kurfürstendamm 'the minimum cost is 60 marks, usually 80 marks'.[459] Moreover, streetwalking did not entail the same costs as bar-based work. When interviewed in the early 1960s, some older prostitute women in Frankfurt presented street prostitution as less financially risky as, if they did not find a client, they were not left with a bill to pay.[460]

Women who sold sex on the street were typically the most visible to the general population. Kitty, who had started selling sex on Berlin's Augsburger Straße in the later 1950s aged eighteen, described how this visibility, necessary to attract potential clients, also stretched to other residents of the city. Despite her attempts to keep work and personal life separate, when acquaintances of her children saw her standing at the roadside, this visibility proved a drawback to the work she had chosen.[461] Selling sex on the street also made women more vulnerable to police intervention, including arrests on the basis of criminal paragraphs on 'conspicuous' solicitation or—in the case of cities such as Cologne and Hamburg—*Sperrbezirk* or 'restricted area' regulations which restricted street prostitution. The implementation of local *Sperrbezirke* will build the focus of the public order chapter.

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[456] Kreuzer, *Prostitution*, 248.
[457] Kahmann/Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution*, 74.
[458] Ibid., 74.
[459] *Der Strich*, 37–38.
[460] Teuber, *Über den charaktertypologischen Wandel*, 86.
[461] Biermann, *Wir sind Frauen!*, 115.

When selling sex on the streets, the location chosen for the sex acts themselves varied also. From the streets, women offered sex in cars, in the streets, in parks, in hotels or private apartments. Police files note the sale of sex in ruins continued in Hamburg into the 1960s, and this was similar across West Germany, particularly in Cologne and West Berlin, which had suffered significant housing damage and seen slow rebuilding efforts.[462]

Choosing the streets or ruins as location for the sex itself meant that costs were kept down, whilst women could stay clothed and keep the encounter short. With the popularity of automobiles, women entered the cars of their clients, for instance driving with them to a nearby carpark out of sight of patrolling police officers. Sylvia, who had begun selling sex in St. Georg in 1975, recalled the time as follows:

> A car stopped, you opened the door, were friendly, told him your price. And when he said yes, you got in. You had to drive further away to a car park, because St. Georg is a *Sperrbezirk* […]. Then he gave you the money, you asked him if he wanted anything extra, then the job was done and you drove back.[463]

Typically, they returned to the same parking spots for reasons of safety, where other women might be working.[464] The more cramped space of the car also allowed women to service clients without getting undressed, and practices such as '*Falle stellen*'—in which women simulated penetrative sex with their hands without the knowledge of the client—were easier to execute.[465]

When going with clients to nearby hotels, women who sold sex charged more for the encounter to cover the costs of the room. Hotel owners and managers risked *Kuppelei* prosecutions for renting rooms to unmarried couples, therefore, a knowledge of hotels that practiced lenience was of utmost importance. In 1960, West Berlin's health offices knew of 107 such hotels. If they had bars, this could be a lucrative supplementary income, as prostitutes waited with their clients for a room to become free. To secure patrons, some hotels reportedly allowed homeless women to use the rooms after they had visited with a client.[466] Police reports detail the changing practices in Hotel Königsberg in Berlin's Charlottenburg district. In early 1961, prostitutes and their clients were able to rent a room in the hotel for between 8 and 10 marks, for a 60-90 minute period. After police searches in June and August had discovered multiple unmarried couples in shared rooms, they ordered staff to only lease out separate rooms.

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[462] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1953-1963, 331-1II-2679, StHH; Grimm, 'Zum gegenwärtigen Stand', 6.
[463] 'Ich bin mein eigener Chef', 104–6.
[464] Teuber, *Über den charaktertypologischen Wandel*, 88.
[465] Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 208.
[466] Grimm, 'Zum gegenwärtigen Stand', 6.

From then on, prostitutes and clients would often be given two separate but adjoining rooms, to avoid police sanctions. Nonetheless, in 1963, the hotel owner was prosecuted for *Kuppelei*.[467]

Street prostitution could also prove dangerous, particularly when women entered client cars, which could leave them vulnerable to violence or pressure to perform wider variety of sex acts.[468] Police patrols often focused more on monitoring streetwalkers than on protecting women from potentially threatening clients. Recounting how a colleague had been physically assaulted one afternoon by a client, Kitty detailed the police response: 'They didn't do anything! They told her she hadn't needed to go with him!'[469] When facing violence or potential violence from clients, women who sold sex on the streets often had little reason to turn to the police for help. Instead, it seems women largely tried to protect each other. When faced with the threat of violence or theft under cover of darkness, Kitty and her colleagues stood closer together and watched each other in the carparks. Kitty also chose clients according to her assumptions regarding safety, preferring regular clients, avoiding non-German clients and refusing drunk clients.[470] Often, women also turned to pimps as protector figures, to help manage the dangers selling sex on the street could pose.

Although often overlooked by authorities when describing commercial sex, personal relationships between women who sold sex characterised and defined experiences of sexual labour.[471] Particularly in street prostitution, where women getting into strangers' cars were often vulnerable, community and support between colleagues could be decisive, as various recollections of women who worked on the street attest to. For instance, Sylvia from Hamburg's St. Georg recalled how women regularly warned each other about clients who were demanding, dangerous, or who did not pay.[472] Yet as well as offering support and safety measures, community between women could while away time when waiting, or make unpleasant weather conditions more bearable. Kim, who had sold sex on the street in Berlin, detailed how camaraderie on the street could overcome the discomfort of standing outside in the winter:

> The motivation to go to the job was [...] much better because each of us knew that the other one would be there too. At night between 1 and 2 o'clock we had a 'lunch' break

[467] 'Gründe', 22.01.1963, B-Rep-065-02-50, LAB.
[468] Teuber, *Über den charaktertypologischen Wandel*, 87. Similarly noted by 1950s women in London, Laite, *Common Prostitutes*, 205.
[469] Biermann, *Wir sind Frauen!*, 158.
[470] Ibid., 158–61.
[471] On camaraderie amongst women selling sex: Marilynn Wood Hill, *Their Sisters' Keepers: Prostitution in New York City, 1830-1870* (Berkeley, 1993), 293–321.
[472] 'Ich bin mein eigener Chef', 104–6.

> in a cosy Italian restaurant, and looked forward to the break all night long, where we ate something nice, had a drink and talked. This warmed us up in the winter, and afterwards the work went on again.[473]

Despite this, she recognized the competition that could occur between women on the street, and feelings of rejection on days where she was overlooked by potential clients: 'You wonder what the reason is, is it your hairstyle, have you become too fat, are you wearing the wrong clothes, is your make-up bad?'.[474] Community building, working with other women selling sex, could vary greatly.

By the late 1970s, local authorities and press in each of the three cities also began to acknowledge the presence of a new group of people selling sex on the streets. Predominantly located around train stations, the presence of, primarily young, drug-using men and women selling sex developed into a media obsession in the late 1970s and 1980s. In Hamburg, this phenomenon was located primarily in the St.Georg area around the train station, in Cologne near its central station and in West Berlin around the station *Zoologischer Garten* (known as Bahnhof Zoo). *Wir Kinder vom Bahnhof Zoo,* a book covering Christiane F.'s experiences selling sex to buy heroin as a young teenager, became an immediate bestseller after its publication in 1978. The text was compiled with the help of two journalists, and her assertions cannot be taken unquestioningly. The book does, however, emphasise that the drug-using 'scene' was removed from other street-based prostitution. The divide was both spatial and temporal; in discussing West Berlin's Kurfürstenstraße, another typical location for drug-users to sell sex during the day, Christiane wrote 'Junkies [*Fixers*] didn't go there at night because there were too many pro hookers around'.[475]

Other street workers also acknowledged this division. In her tales of solidarity and mutual support amongst colleagues, Kitty from West Berlin took care to differentiate drug-using women.[476] The 'hash-brides' (*Haschbräute*), she claimed, broke down the agreements forged amongst street-working women 'because they work without protection and are sixteen, seventeen, and practically up for anything'. She contrasted this with the 'other girls' who had always set limits and who were now being put under increased pressures.[477] Kitty's assertions suggest that she engaged in creating

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[473] 'Arbeits- und Berufswelt', *Hydra Nachtexpress*, 15.12.1981, 7.
[474] Ibid.,7.
[475] Horst Rieck and Kai Hermann, *Christiane F.: Wir Kinder vom Bahnhof Zoo* (Hamburg, 1981), 286.
[476] Papadogiannis also documents how Greek trans* sex workers in West Berlin 'believed that they ran the danger of being attacked by their non-foreign-born German colleagues': Papadogiannis, 'Greek Trans Women', 349.
[477] Biermann, *Wir sind Frauen!*, 174.

hierarchies between 'good' and 'bad' prostitutes, a practice commonly referred to as the 'whorearchy'.[478]

The presence of, primarily young, drug-using women selling sex, and the divisions upheld between this group and other street-working women, illustrates the existence of hierarchies, separate cohorts and experiences amongst women selling sex on the street. As Kitty alluded to, where agreements between women were upheld and enforced, they could charge higher prices for their services and ensure certain protections. Without such agreements, street prostitution could look markedly different. *Wir Kinder vom Bahnhof Zoo* also includes references to working together, and describes selling sex as business or transaction (*Geschäft*), suggesting understandings of selling sex as labour could also be found amongst the drug-using and underage communities.[479]

Bar-based commercial sex

When avoiding police presence on the streets, street-working women took cover in bars, where they could meet clients whilst attracting less public attention. Still others sold sex primarily in bars, although the bars themselves, as well as the sexual services offered and prices charged could differ widely.[480] Because of the diversity of client groups and their wishes, contemporaries noted that women sold sex from 'pubs of all kinds and every shade'.[481] Often the interests between bar owners and prostitutes overlapped, as women encouraged their clients to purchase drinks, often with prior agreements of the bar staff.[482] In fact, some 'night bars' were run for precisely this purpose, with private rooms elsewhere, and a management that prescribed behaviour and appearance.

Unlike in the streets or in designated 'prostitute residences', women who solicited in bars were confined to working in the evenings and through the nights. Although this entailed less flexibility than street work for instance, the working hours were popular with mothers of young children, who were able to work as their children slept, yet who reported that their own resulting sleep deficit could be particularly draining. Those without caring responsibilities claimed that the working hours ate into

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[478] See: Gillian Abel, '"You're Selling a Brand": Marketing Commercial Sex Online', *Sexualities*, 2021, 3.
[479] Rieck/Hermann, *Christiane F*, 263, 267.
[480] Notes from a health office patrol in Frankfurt find similar Teuber, *Über den charaktertypologischen Wandel*, 84.
[481] Grimm, 'Zum gegenwärtigen Stand', 7.
[482] Ibid., 7.

their personal lives, leaving time for domestic chores but little time for a separate social life.[483]

Women who sold sex in bars were often expected by managers to drink alcohol with the clientele. In Hamburg's 'Monika-Bar', a place known for employing trans* prostitutes, employees reportedly received one mark for every Cola-Rum drink a guest bought them, resulting in a situation where they were expected to drink up to 50 Cola-Rum drinks daily. To manage demand, staff poured drinks away where possible, whilst other establishments made sure to secretly give soliciting women alcohol-free options.[484] Dörthe, who sold sex in night bars in the late 1970s, described a previous bar she had worked in: 'You could always choose between Asti and Pommery. There you could always decide, do you want to have a sore stomach tomorrow or a sore head?'[485] Whilst stating that alcohol consumption buoyed her confidence with clients and eased her comfort of wearing nothing but an apron as work uniform, she acknowledged that many of her colleagues developed alcohol dependency issues.[486]

Particular practices, including prescriptions on appearance, clothing or behaviour, depended on the bar in question. Cases of women selling sex in bars dressed only in aprons, for instance, are rare until the later 1970s. In the 1950s and 1960s, women who sold sex often chose eye-catching clothing, hairstyles and cosmetics to distinguish themselves.[487] In many cases, solicitation in bars could resemble romantic evenings. In Hamburg's *Tanzcafé Mehrer*, each table was equipped with a telephone, and women looking to meet clients could ring the tables of their choosing. Typically, after drinks and dancing, they would leave to a hotel across the road. In *Lausen und Menke* on Hamburg's Reeperbahn, contact could be made at the bar or on the dancefloor.[488] Whilst many bars in the three cities were under police observation, police intervention remained limited if practices resembled bourgeois acquaintance-making, at least to the outside.

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[483] Biermann, *Wir sind Frauen!*, 166.
[484] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1953-1963, 331-1II-2679, StHH.
[485] Biermann, *Wir sind Frauen!*, 145.
[486] Ibid., 144, 166. See: Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 213.
[487] Kreuzer, *Prostitution*, 260–61.
[488] Alexander, *Prostitution in Deutschland*, 32–33.

Selling sex in the 'prostitute residences'

Many contemporary observers in the 1950s and 1960s equated the sex industry with traditional brothel streets such as those in Hamburg and Cologne.[489] A hangover from previous police regulation, these former brothels were now termed 'prostitute residences' (*Dirnenwohnheime*) by local administrators to circumvent the ban on brothels. A 1955 Federal Court of Justice decision had strengthened the distinction between 'brothels' and 'prostitute residences' as separated categories by determining that renting rooms to prostitutes did not suffice for a *Kuppelei* charge, if the rooms were rented at a 'reasonable' (*angemessen*) price, thus allowing for larger scale 'houseshares'. The decision did not define what a 'reasonable' price was, allowing scope for interpretation.[490]

'Prostitute residences' were prominent in local discussions of commercial sex, yet they represented only a fraction of women selling sex in Hamburg and Cologne in the 1960s. Local authorities often encouraged registered women to work in 'prostitute residences', however, to facilitate their surveillance of the sex industry. These were typically small houses with up to eight women, located in the former brothel streets. In 1964, 32 'prostitute residences' remained in Cologne, primarily in the streets Kleine Brinkgasse, Im Stavenhof and Nächelsgasse, housing around 220 women in total.[491] In 1957 Hamburg had three remaining brothel streets with 49 houses in all. 398 women were registered for these 'prostitute residences', the majority aged between 25 and 30 years: the youngest 21, the eldest 53. Apart from one British national and one stateless German speaker, all of the residents were German citizens.[492]

Working in a 'prostitute residence' fell within the remit of local police regulations to distinguish the houses from brothel or brothel-like establishments. Usually, they were prohibited from having a traditional 'salon' room in which to meet clients. In Cologne, women who sold sex were required to register the house as their primary residence, to dispel the impression that this was a workplace and not accommodation. Ironically, such restrictions made the *Dirnenwohnheime* resemble the closed brothels of traditional regulation.[493] A madam (*Wirtschafterin*), always female

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[489] This representative function held by the former brothel streets in the 1950s and 1960s shifted to the Eros-Centers in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

[490] Grimm, *Neue Formen der Prostitution*, 27–28.

[491] 'Stand 1.5.1964', X-Best-6219-A18, HAStK.

[492] *Senatskanzlei Hamburg* to *Bundesminister des Innern*, 'Bekämpfung der Prostitution', 05.08.1957, B-106-17303, BArch.

[493] Sophie de Schaepdrijver, 'Regulated Prostitution in Brussels, 1844-1877: A Policy and Its Implementation', *Historical Social Research*, 37 (1986), 89.

and often a former prostitute, typically managed each house and agreed to enforce the police regulations.[494] Although there was no legal reason to prohibit a man from acting as a madam for a 'prostitute residence', police officers in Cologne expressed consternation on discovery that a man was registered as living at the 'residence' in Im Stavenhof 22. For the police, this was evidence of his role as a pimp and could result in prosecution.[495]

Life in a 'prostitute residence' meant being confronted by a range of restrictions and regulations. Cologne's police continued to illegally maintain a 'prostitute index', including copies of residents' signed agreement to the regulations.[496] Not permitted to have a shared room, even their supplies were under suspicion, for they were forbidden to keep levels of alcohol and other drinks over the level of a 'normal' household.[497] With such impositions on daily life, women registered in the 'prostitute residences' of Hamburg and Cologne often secretly lived elsewhere, for example in an apartment that they did not disclose to the authorities and returned to the residences regularly for their shifts. The absence of registration made prosecution more difficult, and there was little that could be done against it by the police.[498] Thus, working in a 'prostitute residence' could often be combined with a separate, private life in which one could avoid the associations which living in a 'residence' entailed.

Police regulations were often disregarded in practice. Guidelines regarding Cologne's Kleine Brinkgasse, for instance, determined that ground floor windows were to be closed and covered. To meet clients, residents instead waited behind the front door. Small windows placed at eye-level enabled a first glimpse by the client, as well as the place for a first negotiation of prices and services.[499] Yet, as these restrictions severely impeded the process of meeting clients, women often disobeyed the guidelines regarding ground-floor windows. House rules, set by the madam, could also contradict police regulations, for instance, in determining whether alcohol was offered on the premises (despite the illegality of serving alcohol in a house in which women sold sex).[500] Residents of Herbertstraße recalled how selling drinks to clients was a central part of their job: 'A new drink had to be poured every quarter of an hour; anyone who

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[494] See; 'Erklärung', 28.05.1963, BR-0051-564, LAV NRW.
[495] 'Streifenbericht', 17.02.1960, BR-0051-562, LAV NRW.
[496] Kiehne to *Polizeipräsident* Hamburg, October 1967, BR-0051-563, LAV NRW.
[497] 'Auswüchse der Prostitution', BR-0051-564, LAV NRW.
[498] 'Errichtung einer zentralen Dirnenunterkunft', 02.08.1966, BR-2050-7, LAV NRW; Rolf Alexander, *Prostitution in St. Pauli* (Munich, 1968), 78.
[499] Ibid., 66.
[500] Ibid., 78.

was upstairs with the guest for more than ten minutes and didn't finish the drink was warned'.[501]

In Hamburg's Herbertstraße, a street only around 100 metres long, the regulations differed to Cologne's Kleine Brinkgasse. This impacted both the street's appearance, as well as the working forms of its female residents. Although by the 1960s both streets were shielded by a walled entrance, behind the iron walls a different scene played out. Hamburg's Herbertstraße, more so than Cologne's Kleine Brinkgasse functioned as an attraction for tourists (both male and female) and contemporary reports describe a bustling street. The large ground-floor windows of the Herbertstraße houses (*Koberfenster*), described by observers as resembling well-lit shop fronts, were a popular attraction. There sat the residents, on sofas, chairs or bar stools, during the day often reading or knitting **[see A.1.]**. In the evenings or during the night passers-by received more attention. Until the mid-1960s, women working in the *Koberfenster* were required to sit behind white curtains. In practice, however, the curtains were primarily reserved for the police patrols. As one resident of *Herbertstraße* recalled in the early 1980s, 'Of course we didn't stick to it [...] and if the vice chief came through here, you could hear psst! psst! everywhere—and then the curtains flew shut'.[502]

Unlike in Kleine Brinkgasse, the Herbertstraße women tended to depend less on regular clients, but rather on the sailors and tourists who flocked to the street. Here, the first exchange with a potential client took place at the window, after which, if satisfactory, the client could enter the house. A guidebook from 1968 detailed cases of verbal abuse stemming from drunk spectators in particular, to which women responded with witty retorts, or, in more extreme cases, with buckets of water or urine poured out of a window onto troublemakers.[503] Although guides to Hamburg portrayed Herbertstraße as a site of unchecked vice, police presence was typical. The photographs of the *Koberfenster* depicted below were glued into the chronicles of Hamburg's vice police, suggesting that the second image was staged for police records.

Work in a 'prostitute residence'—as long as local authorities continued to tolerate them—could offer women the stability of a longer-term workplace. For the women of Cologne's Im Stavenhof, the reputation of the houses allowed them to continue working into older age, many moving there from the Kleine Brinkgasse as they

[501] Fee Tschocke and Andrej Reiser, *Domenica und die Herbertstraße* (Frankfurt/Main, 1981), 50.
[502] Ibid., 51.
[503] Alexander, *Prostitution in St. Pauli*, 63–91.

aged. In 1961, the oldest Stavenhof resident was 64.[504] 'Prostitute residences' could function as a place to build up relationships with 'regulars' or to offer more specialised services. Whilst BDSM practices were not officially permitted, they were increasingly tolerated by police over the period.[505] By the early 1980s, Herbertstraße was home to around 40 of the so-called 'boot ladies' (*Stiefelfrauen*).[506]

As well as contending with institutional encroachments, such as police regulations or health office registration, women of the 'residences' in both Hamburg and Cologne occasionally reported examples of exploitation in the relationship with madams, managers or landlords. Freund-Widder has detailed an anonymous letter from November 1950 which documented exploitation in Hamburg's *Dirnenwohnheime*, including tales of rents reaching 300 marks for a room, ten times the typical rate.[507] Women of Hamburg's Ulricusstraße reported high rental costs and costs for laundry, light, and gas, and turned to the health office for help:

> We do not want to cause the closure of the houses, as this would have even greater disadvantages for us women, because in the public houses we women have our order, cleanliness and care and the annoyance of the public on the roads is prevented by this. With this we only want to achieve that we are not exploited in an unjustified way by the landlords.[508]

Women from the 'prostitute residences' acted collectively to demand better working conditions. They did not portray exploitation as inherent to brothels or 'prostitute residences', but rather explicitly acknowledged their interest in upholding this form of commercial sex. Such examples illustrate how women who sold sex organised to improve their working conditions before the more prominent prostitute activism of the 1970s and 1980s.[509] In fact, historians of prostitution have recovered numerous examples of women who sold sex advocating for their work. Lyndal Roper, has, for

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[504] List of 'prostitute residences' in Im Stavenhof, 02.01.1961, BR-0051-562, LAV NRW; 'Neuer Hausbesitzer will Dirnen hinaussetzen', *KR*, 29 March 1972, Best-1728-A264, HAStK., Best-1728-A264, HAStK.

[505] §226a StGB determined that 'anyone who commits bodily harm with the consent of the injured person acts unlawfully if the act is, regardless of the individual's consent, contrary to public morality': Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 204.

[506] Tschocke/Reiser, *Domenica*, 28.

[507] Ibid., 251.

[508] Freund, Michaela, 'Women, Venereal Disease', 252–53.

[509] On the first organised protest by sex workers, the Lyon church occupation in 1975, see: Lilian Mathieu, 'An Unlikely Mobilization: The Occupation of Saint-Nizier Church by the Prostitutes of Lyon', *Revue Française de Sociologie*, 42 (2001), 107.

instance, explored how prostitute women in 16th century Bavaria defended selling sex to their city councils, arguing that it was regular work—and not a sin.[510]

Reports of abusive working conditions in 'prostitute residences' continued well after the passage of the new GBG in 1953. Statements from women who had left Cologne's Kleine Brinkgasse in the late 1960s state that they had felt 'exploited' whilst living there.[511] In Kleine Brinkgasse 8, for instance, the madam had supposedly demanded each client be registered on a time-based rate. She had claimed a fee of 10% of their earnings per client and, should a client take longer than the allotted time, she had demanded a higher payment. Women who had since left the house claimed that this happened in other houses in the street as well.[512] Such happenings directly contravened regulations which forbade others inordinately profiting from their work, yet likely took place in a system which intensified risk and reliance on others. However, as the Ulricusstraße letter indicates, residents were able to both acknowledge exploitation in their workplace and to prefer working in the 'prostitute residences' to other, less-desirable, locations. When both Cologne and Hamburg looked to close older prostitute residences over the period—as explored in the 'public order' chapter—this coexistence became evident.

Although city administrations worked hard to close traditional brothel streets, Hamburg's Herbertstraße was spared. The street remains an iconic part of the city's red-light district today. During the 1970s, many of the street's leaseholders renovated the houses inside and out, combatting the criticisms of former brothel streets as run-down inner-city locations.[513] The street functioned as a tourist attraction, with visitors just as likely to be there to view the 'disrespectability' as to purchase the services on offer. In the late 1970s, and apparently at the behest of the women who worked in Herbertstraße, entrance to the street was prohibited for minors and non-prostitute women, to combat the presence of voyeurs.[514] The gate now read—'No entry for under 18s. Women not welcome'—and the restriction remains to this day.[515]

When interviewed in 1981, Herbertstraße residents who had worked there since the early 1960s reflected on some changes they saw as decisive. They recalled a time when the Herbertstraße was in higher demand, with fewer alternative locations, and

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[510] Roper, 'Discipline and Respectability', 20.
[511] *Polizeipräsident Bonn* to *Polizeipräsident Köln,* 17.04.1969, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.
[512] Ibid.
[513] Tschocke/Reiser, *Domenica*, 14.
[514] Künkel, *Sex, Drugs & Control*, 202.
[515] Tschocke/Reiser, *Domenica*, 13.

claimed that the services and circumstances of transactional sex had changed remarkably over the years. Previously, sex had been offered for 20 marks, 30 if naked:

> Naked meant: dress off, panties off. Bras, petticoats, suspenders and stockings were kept on. If a guest complained, he was told innocently: "Oh, you want me to be completely naked? You'll have to add a tenner to that!" And even then the ladies kept their stockings and suspenders on.[516]

In this, they referenced the practice known as *Kobern*, in which women charged extra for all supplementary services, including taking off clothes, showing their breasts, any form of touching or foreplay. This allowed them to demand much higher prices than initially agreed to by the client.[517] Tales of *Kobern* or *Nachkobern* appear repeatedly as a method used by women to augment their earnings, in street-, bar- or brothel-based work. As well as suggesting a possible development in typical practices, these statements serve as a useful reminder of the diversity of services falling under the term 'prostitution'.

The Herbertstraße women also recalled the practice of 'pretend sex' or *Falle schieben*, which they claimed had been taught to all new arrivals in the street. Instead of offering penetrative sex, they would guide the penis into the 'pre-wetted hand'.[518] References to the practice of *Falle schieben* occur from across West Germany. Annegret Staiger has encountered similar reminiscences in her ethnographic research in Bavaria, during which older women told her of the practice, insisting that previously, they had not performed penetrative sex at all and had always charged extra for additional services, such as removing clothing.[519] Margot Kreuzer describes that, by the 1980s, *Falle schieben* was no longer common, because most prostitutes no longer knew the technique.[520] Evidently, the period saw a general trend of greater demands and expectations by clients of women who sold sex, in particular when the commercial sex market collapsed in the 1980s.

Whilst West Berlin did not have traditional brothel streets, in 1960 the health offices noted that 5% of registered women (around 300-500 people) worked in 'salon' prostitution. These were illegal brothels, normally run by women, located in an apartment with multiple rooms for women to meet clients. Opening times were usually restricted to the hours 11am-7pm—to keep the brothel discreet and to avoid police

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[516] Ibid., 50.
[517] Kreuzer, *Prostitution*, 259.
[518] Ibid., 50.
[519] Annegret Staiger, *Legalized Prostitution in Germany: Inside the New Mega Brothels* (Bloomington, 2022), 65.
[520] Kreuzer, *Prostitution*, 260.

intervention—and brothel owners reportedly preferred locations close to doctor's or lawyer's offices, with a high footfall. Income was usually split equally between the owners and the women who sold sex. If caught, brothel owners could face a *Kuppelei* prosecution, punished with fines or prison time.[521]

Selling sex in the Eros-Centers

Over the course of the 1960s and 1970s, the local authorities in Hamburg and Cologne set about closing the traditional brothel streets. Women who had previously worked in the small 'prostitute residences' in Hamburg and Cologne were evicted and encouraged to move to the newly opened Eros-Centers, large-scale modernised 'prostitute residences'. In Hamburg, the *Eros-Center* and the *Palais d'Amour* opened in 1967 and 1968 respectively, whilst Cologne's *Eros-Center* followed in 1972. To distinguish between Eros-Centers as general term, and individual establishments of the same name, I italicise the latter.

In 1970, the houses in Hamburg's Herbertstraße had a total of 235 rooms, while the St.Pauli *Eros-Center* and *Palais d'Amour* had 171 and 131 rooms respectively.[522] When Cologne's *Eros-Center* opened its doors two years later, around 190 women rented rooms in the eight-storey building on the city's outskirts.[523] The *Eros-Center* was later remodelled to offer 400 rooms, although it soon became clear that these would not be filled.[524] Both cities saw strong opposition by women of the 'prostitute residences' to the move to the Eros-Centers. In 1970, whilst the Herbertstraße rooms were 80% filled, the *Eros-Center* had a 60% occupancy and the *Palais d'Amour* only 50%.[525]

The apartments in Cologne's *Eros-Center* differed from the rooms in the former brothel streets. The furnished apartments featured a telephone, alarm system and a safe, whilst each floor had a small kitchenette staffed in the day by a female employee, in the evening by a male employee. [526] To meet clients, however, women working in the Eros-Centers had to wait in outdoor covered courtyards, for existing laws on brothel-keeping still prohibited 'salon' rooms. Standing in the cold could leave you with kidney problems, as Corry recounted to a journalist in 1981, after leaving Hamburg's *Eros-*

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[521] Grimm, 'Zum gegenwärtigen Stand', 7; 'Bericht über die Prostitution', 1970, B-Rep-002-6688, LAB.
[522] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1967-1972, 331-1II-2681, StHH.
[523] 'Verdacht der Ausbeutung von Dirnen', to *Kripo* Mannheim, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.
[524] 'Sitte' to *Gemeentepolitie* Rotterdam, 'Eros-Center', 06.12.1974, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.
[525] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1967-1972, 331-1II-2681, StHH.
[526] 'Verdacht der Ausbeutung von Dirnen', to *Kripo* Mannheim, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.

Center to work in a Herbertstraße house: 'The first few days my feet hurt so much. Sometimes you're left standing all alone in the big contact yard, totally unprotected and anyone can touch you. Here at least you're protected by the windowpanes'.[527]

A 1972 police report described the courtyard in Cologne's *Eros-Center* soon after opening. At 8pm, the officers counted 27 women in the courtyard, guessing around 40 in total were working at the time. The women, they assumed, were aged between 20 and 35 years. At the same time, the officers counted around 300 potential clients waiting in the yard, around 100 of whom they deemed to be foreigners. 'Mixed crowd, some well-dressed men, but also people known to the police.'[528] As more women moved to the *Eros-Center*, however, it became more difficult to attract attention in the busy courtyards, and competition between women intensified. Unlike the traditional brothel streets, with around six to eight women working in any one house, Eros-Centers required a woman to stand out from or compete with many others directly. A 1969 account from Hamburg suggested that large numbers of men came to view the women working in the *Eros-Center* courtyard, only to then turn to more discrete sites for the purchase of sex elsewhere in the city.[529]

The large-scale Eros-Centers in Cologne and Hamburg also employed kitchen and cleaning staff, security personnel and supervisors. The relationship between the women who sold sex in Cologne's *Eros-Center* and the centre's supervisors likely depended on interpersonal relationships between individuals. Cologne police reports from 1973, however, do suggest a tendency by supervising personnel to demand monetary tips ('almost constantly') and to threaten prostitutes with termination should they complain. Cologne's police department noted examples of 'vigilante justice' by these employees, which, they claimed, often went far beyond acceptable actions of self-defence.[530] Many of the men employed by the *Eros-Center* were recorded as having violent criminal histories including convictions for theft, fraud, pimping, *Kuppelei*, and rape.[531]

Women who worked in the new *Eros-Center* remained under health office supervision and were required to attend the regular VD examinations. Eros-Centers also

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[527] Tschocke/Reiser, *Domenica*, 13. Street-based women reportedly often suffered from kidney problems: Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 208.
[528] *Fahndung E* report, 12.01.1972, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.
[529] Alexander, *Prostitution in Deutschland*, 35. Kreuzer notes similar behaviour at Frankfurt's *Eros-Center*: Kreuzer, *Prostitution*, 266.
[530] Cologne *Kriminalpolizei* to ECK management, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.
[531] 'Eros-Center Köln', 15.10.1975, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.

still contended with the restrictions regarding Germany's *Kuppelei* paragraph, which looked to minimise the exploitation of women selling sex by landlords. In practice, its effects were limited due to the Federal Court decision which judged houseshares with 'reasonable' rent did not suffice for a *Kuppelei* prosecution. This had been further expanded when the Bavarian Higher Regional Court came to the decision that the presumed inconveniences that could result from renting rooms to prostitutes—the resulting damage to the landlord's reputation, potential excesses (*Ausschreitungen*), the unreliableness of the tenants, visits from occupying forces—justified a 'inconvenience surcharge' above typical rental prices. The grounds for an 'inconvenience surcharge' were confirmed by the Federal Court of Justice in 1957.[532]

In Cologne's *Eros-Center*, the basic rent price for a room remained low, yet numerous additional costs meant that the cost of working far exceeded that of the former brothel streets. Reports indicate that women who had previously lived in one of Cologne's 'residences' experienced a loss of earnings.[533] The effects of greater competition were exacerbated by the rents and additional costs placed on women. Records from Hamburg's *Eros-Center* are similar, with women required to pay the daily room rent of 65 marks, even in cases of illness.[534] Whilst official restrictions on brothel-keeping and 'encouraging prostitution' remained in place, police found a list of house rules in which women were told to work at least six hours every day (except Sundays). Those who didn't comply, were threatened with a fine. In a pimping allegation case, a woman who worked in Hamburg's *Palais d'Amour* for 4.5 years claimed that, because the manager recorded the earnings of women, he was able to exercise control over their work.[535]

When Gerda W.* was arrested soliciting on the street in Cologne in January 1973 she told officers that the daily rent for a room in the Cologne *Eros-Center* was 120 marks. General prices for clients were recorded by officers as 20 marks.[536] For Gerda, the costs were a central reason not to apply for a place there, as she claimed that even on a good day, the daily room rate was too high to remain profitable.[537]

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[532] Grimm, 'Zum gegenwärtigen Stand', 28.
[533] 'Erkenntnis- und Erfahrungsanfrage', 23.06.1972, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.
[534] For costs at Frankfurt's *Eros-Center*, see: Kreuzer, *Prostitution*, 268.
[535] Kahmann/Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution*, 83. 82-84
[536] *Fahndung E* report, 12.01.1972, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.
[537] 'Wohngeld der Dirnen im Eroscenter', 25.01.1973, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.

Indoor prostitution: Massage parlours, saunas, and salons

Away from the policed streets and regulated 'prostitute residences', women also turned to off-street locations, such as private apartments, to sell sex. Although the locations and circumstances varied, women primarily contacted clients through advertisements in local papers. Searching for hidden indoor prostitution became a central concern of police work on prostitution in large West German cities.

Although the authorities were often concerned with cataloguing the numbers of illegal brothels, assessing the scale retrospectively remains difficult as indoor prostitution's success rested on avoiding police intervention. In Berlin, health office staff claimed to have closer access than police to the numbers of illegal brothels, bound by staff-patient confidentiality.[538] Newspaper advertisements also testify to their prevalence in the city's sexual landscape. A study of prostitution in Hamburg in the late 1970s investigated 20 editions of the Hamburg BILD. Each edition typically published over 20 ads for 'saunas' or 'private clubs' as well as around 20 for 'special-cosmetic salons'.[539] The emergence of massage parlours or private sauna clubs with 'brothel-like character' is evident across the Federal Republic.[540] These semi-public fronts for sexual services were common in each of the three cities under examination in this work. Even within the cities themselves, however, they varied drastically: in appearance, prices and services offered.

Indoor prostitution was often masked as massage parlours or saunas, which could, but did not necessarily, impact the services offered to clients. Advertising in this manner could provide an image of respectability (or quasi-respectability), whilst women performed a variety of services under a range of circumstances within the semi-privacy of their rooms. These businesses catered to a range of customer bases; although some places barely held-up the façade, others incorporated commercial sex offerings in a luxury sauna setting. Although advertisements—which typically alluded to but did not explicitly refer to the sexual services they offered—were necessary to attract the client base, they posed a danger for employees and managers. The proprietor of a parlour in Düsseldorf, for instance, placed an advertisement in the *Westdeutsche Zeitung* which prompted the Düsseldorf police to start an investigation. She was eventually arrested by the Cologne police and sentenced on a *Kuppelei* charge to a fine of 1,500 marks.[541]

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[538] Grimm, 'Zum gegenwärtigen Stand', 3.
[539] Kahmann/Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution*, 86.
[540] 'Private Sauna-Clubs', 18.05.1981, 136-1-4614, StHH.
[541] 'Anklageschrift', 19.04.1973, Gerichte-Rep-287-1536, LAV NRW.

In the search for 'commercial debauchery', police encountered various forms of sexual and sexualised labour. Some massage parlours offered so-called 'relaxation massages', involving manual stimulation of the client's genitals, but no oral or penetrative sex. Police still treated them as illegal brothels—and indeed some massage parlours were a front for prostitution—yet some women later convicted of *Kuppelei* told the courts that they had believed themselves to be working within the bounds of the law.[542] Marlies W.*, convicted of *Kuppelei* in 1973 for managing a massage parlour, claimed that she had learned of this method in February 1971 after seeing a short television feature (*Skizzen aus dem Kölner Alltag*) in which the proprietor of a massage salon had publicly stated that her employees performed such massages. Marlies also told the court that she had consulted Cologne's vice police, who had assured her of the legality of her undertaking.[543] If her claims are to be believed, she likely did not see herself as directly involved in prostitution. The courts did not make such a distinction.

Women working in massage parlours often also circumvented West Germany's restrictive pornography laws, including the so-called 'Filth and Trash' (*Schund und Schmutz*) law, to offer clients pornography showings as a further service. Although pornography remained banned until 1975, Dutch imports, as well as domestically-produced pornography experienced a boom period in the Federal Republic, particularly between 1969 and 1971.[544] These could be accessed on the German market through mail-order services, neighbourhood kiosks, or through underground film-screenings.[545] For Ute K.*, who offered clients the option of watching a pornographic film at her massage parlour for around ten to twenty marks—alongside offering 'relaxation massages'—these screenings led to a 'big rush' of clients and the profits enabled Ute to expand from working independently to employing up to four women at a time. Her employees received forty per cent of the massage price, leaving Ute with a monthly profit of up to 2,500 marks, around double what she could hope to earn working in industry or retail.[546] Thus, whilst massage parlours were often seen by authorities as just another form of illegal brothel, or 'commercial debauchery', in fact they often enabled

[542] Case of selling sex in a 'massage parlour': 'Anklageschrift', 16.11.1973, Gerichte-Rep-287-1536, LAV NRW.
[543] 'Urteil Landgericht Köln', 07.11.1973, Gerichte-Rep-287-1179, LAV NRW.
[544] Herzog, *Sex after Fascism*, 145.
[545] See Heineman, *Before Porn Was Legal*.
[546] 'Anklageschrift', 19.03.1975, Gerichte-Rep-287-1536, LAV NRW; Statistisches Landesamt Hamburg, *Statistisches Taschenbuch* (Hamburg, 1972), 184.

women to either restrict or expand the services they offered, which did not necessarily include penetrative sex.

For some women, working in a massage parlour meant they were subject to the working conditions and services decided by the parlour's management. In one parlour on Cologne's Hildeboldplatz, for instance, the women employed claimed to receive a monthly wage of 1,800 marks. The day's takings went, in their entirety, to the parlour's madam who decided both the prices and the services offered. She also determined the attire of her employees, later insisting (in a statement corroborated by the witness statements of the women who worked for her) that they had always remained fully clothed throughout.[547] For others, such as Christine S.*, working as an employee in a massage parlour could be a springboard into more independence. Police reports later documented her as running her own parlour, allowing her to determine the parameters of her labour.[548] Both of the cases were prosecuted under the *Kuppelei* paragraph.

Interpersonal relationships once again emerge as decisive for shaping women's time at work. Having worked in a 'salon' or illegal brothel with 11 colleagues in West Berlin in the 1970s, Vera described in an edition of Hydra's *Nachtexpress* an atmosphere of intense competition:

> There were many women, and they all wanted to make money. The competition was fierce, and even greater was the hatred of those who made money. It took a lot of sensitivity and imagination to catch the attention of the men, because we all had good figures.[549]

She described how many of her colleagues had suffered from substance abuse issues, and how the salon and its employees had numerous problems with clients or with the police. As a self-described 'foreigner', this had made her work particularly precarious. Women who had migrated to West Germany often took greater risks when working in unregistered brothels as, for them, police raids could often result in deportation.[550]

From the mid-1960s onwards, a trend towards luxury brothels took hold across West Germany.[551] In 1969, a guide to prostitution identified at least thirty luxury brothels in West Berlin. These were located primarily in the area around the Kurfürstendamm, in middle-class houses or modern buildings.[552] The author cited the famous *Pension Clausewitz* in Berlin's Charlottenburg, known as the most expensive

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[547] 'Anklageschrift', 19.04.1973, Gerichte-Rep-287-1536, LAV NRW.
[548] 'Anklageschrift', 08.03.1974, Gerichte-Rep-287-1536, LAV NRW.
[549] 'Arbeits- und Berufswelt', 11.
[550] Ibid., 11.
[551] Kreuzer, *Prostitution*, 274.
[552] Alexander, *Prostitution in Deutschland*, 108.

brothel in Berlin before it closed in 1965.[553] Regarding such luxury brothels, he wrote, 'Berlin seems in this area to have been somewhat ahead of the other cities'. He correctly foresaw, however, that both the general move away from the streets as central site of commercial sex and the emergence of luxury brothels would gradually spread across West Germany.[554] In 1976, *Der Spiegel* featured the new trend of luxury brothels, often located outside of the city centres. According to the article, these numbered in their hundreds, although the author drew out examples for Hamburg, Cologne, and West Berlin.[555]

Many of these luxury brothels took the form of 'sex-saunas'. A police investigation into Cologne's *Römerbad* sauna reveals an early example of this new facet of the city's illicit sexual industry. Whilst the premises offered all the facilities expected of a commercial visit to a sauna, investigations revealed that, once inside, visitors could discover a bar at which the sauna's female employees sat naked. Past the pool bar was a room, lined with mattresses and divided into cabins through hanging plastic sheeting, in which customers could withdraw for sexual intercourse.[556] None of the women working in this small snapshot of Cologne's sex industry were known to the city's health office.[557] The sauna employed various barriers to restrict entrance for police and unwitting visitors. Entrance into the 'men only' establishment at 200 marks far exceeded the typical cost of a sauna ticket and would indicate to the suspecting and deter the uninitiated.[558] On paying the fee, visitors were required to strip fully and lock all their possessions away. As far as the reports discovered, the only possible route to the bar was to swim through the pool.[559] 200 marks entry was more than the typical 20-50 marks for entry to sauna brothels that Kreuzer found in her study of Frankfurt, but reportedly also covered the costs of one drink at the bar and sexual intercourse.[560] Moreover, although police interviewed a man who claimed to have been swindled at this establishment, the visitor admitted to spending six hours there, and to buying numerous drinks and snacks for himself and others.[561]

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[553] Jürgen Klös and Jörg-Michael Klös, 'Von der "Sitte" zum LKA 413', in *Berliner Kriminalpolizei*, 92.
[554] Alexander, *Prostitution in Deutschland*, 108.
[555] '"Das geht so gehoben zu"', *Der Spiegel*, 28.03.1976.
[556] 'Ermittlungen zum "römischen Bad"', 1972, Gerichte-Rep-287-1536, LAV NRW.
[557] 'Ordnungsverfügung', 26.02.1973, Gerichte-Rep-287-1536, LAV NRW.
[558] 'Römisches Bad in der St.-Apern-Str', 18.12.1972, Gerichte-Rep-287-1536, LAV NRW.
[559] 'Ermittlungen zum "römischen Bad"', 1972, Gerichte-Rep-287-1536, LAV NRW.
[560] Kreuzer, *Prostitution*, 274.
[561] Statement HM, 15.01.1973, Gerichte-Rep-287-1536, LAV NRW.

Police investigations from West Berlin indicate similar establishments, as the trend towards sauna brothels intensified through and beyond the economic crisis of 1973.[562] In 1978, *Der Spiegel* described how

> enterprises, which offer bathing as well as bonking, have established themselves during the last few years in almost all major West German cities. They advertise in the tabloids sometimes as a 'sauna with a private atmosphere', sometimes as a 'Palm Beach Club' or simply as a 'massage studio', and the customers certainly understand it—a contemporary variation on the brothel and Eros-Center.[563]

The article detailed how guests of one Cologne-based sauna could take out a membership for the typical sauna facilities, paying extra for the sexual services on offer (whilst 'relaxation massages' or masturbation cost 40DM, penetrative sex typically cost 100DM with or 150DM without condom). In this case, the manager was convicted of 'encouraging prostitution' (*Förderung der Prostitution*), particularly because the sex-sauna was deemed an 'excellently equipped business'.[564]

In her recent ethnographic study of contemporary sex work in Germany, Annegret Staiger argues that Germany's popular sex-sauna clubs are a 'radically new business design that had not existed in Germany in this form and magnitude before 2000'.[565] She sees a particularity of sauna brothels in their current form, specifically the club *Flamingo* on which she focusses, that the women who sell sex are freelancers, not employed by the club but rather referred to as its female guests. This practice, however, also has precedents in the twentieth century.[566] The trend of engaging female freelancers is presumably a consequence of West German law which made employment contracts with prostitutes void, due to their violation of public morality.[567] Her insistence that contemporary sauna clubs are 'entirely different establishments' neglects this longer history of underground, luxury sauna brothels in West Germany.[568] Rather, I identify the emergence of sex-saunas, explicitly marketed as a luxury form of commercial sex, as a central development of the West German sex industry from the 1960s onwards.[569]

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[562] See: B-Rep-20-8408, LAB.
[563] 'Optimal frei', *Der Spiegel*, 21.05.1978, 90.
[564] Ibid., 90.
[565] Staiger, *Legalized Prostitution*, 76.
[566] See *Düppel-Sauna* in: B-Rep-020-8414, LAB. Further cases in: B-Rep-020-8410 and B-Rep-020-8408, LAB.
[567] Kreuzer, *Prostitution*, 130.
[568] Staiger, *Legalized Prostitution*, 76.
[569] Kreuzer, *Prostitution*, 273.

Indoor prostitution: Call-girl work

Call-girls typically worked alone or in pairs selling sex from private flats. Advertising as 'models', they included contact phone numbers alongside short ads in the local papers.[570] Call-girl work gained increased attention from authorities over the period, which suggests more women turned to selling sex from private apartments. In 1972, the Hamburg vice police investigated only five cases, in contrast to 37 in 1975, although they estimated that there were around 300 call-girls in Hamburg.[571] In 1977 Hamburg *BILD* typically featured around 150 model ads per edition.[572] The scale of private work becomes clear in for-client publications. The 1977 publication *Mademoiselle: Zwischen Rhein und Ruhr* consisted solely of call-girls reviews from North Rhine-Westphalia, primarily Düsseldorf and Cologne. By the 1980s, the recurring magazine for clients *Der aktuelle Sexführer* featured advertisements with photographs and phone numbers to arrange appointments.

Call-girl work's popularity was influenced by developments in the local-level management of commercial sex and wider technological changes and their uptake by the general population. Women with access to private apartments responded to new 'restricted area' ordinances (*Sperrbezirke*) criminalising on-street solicitation and the gradual closure of traditional 'prostitute residences'. Yet the widespread telephone network—in particular the reduced cost, better connection and the introduction of self-dialling—certainly also contributed.[573] For women who worked as call-girls, access to the telephone was a central prerequisite for meeting potential clients.

Whilst call-girls primarily worked outside of the public eye, the ads they used to contact potential clients could draw police attention. The likelihood of repercussions varied over the period across West Germany. In West Berlin, for instance, prior to 1975, the *Kripo* argued that such ads did not constitute immoral advertisements, and thus that there was no legal basis for police intervention.[574] In January 1975, this reluctance to act against ads for sexual services was addressed in the updated Misdemeanour Law (*Gesetz über Ordnungswidrigkeiten*). This legal change made those involved in the distribution of such immoral ads directly responsible. In West Berlin, after the law

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[570]Kopprucht, report, 24.02.1978, 352-6-5399, StHH.

[571] 'Fotomodelle, Hostessen und Masseusen', *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1972-1977, 331-1II-2682, StHH.

[572] Kahmann/Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution*, 85–86.

[573] Horst Wessel, 'Das Telefon - ein Stück Allgegenwart', in *Telefonbuch: Beiträge zu einer Kulturgeschichte des Telefons*, ed. Stefan Münker and Alexander Roesler (Frankfurt/Main, 2000), 23–25.

[574] Grimm, *Neue Formen der Prostitution*, 32.

changed, the police informed the head of the *Berliner Zeitung* classifieds of the new risks. Seemingly overnight, 'masseuses' turned to 'models', 'but the telephone numbers and addresses in the classified ads have remained the same'.[575] *Mademoiselle*, published two years later, noted that ads had been significantly pared down, revealing at most a name, but no longer including references to special services.[576] In a May 1977 decision, the Karlsruhe Higher Regional Court in Baden-Württemberg found such ads to be illegal, even if they did not contain any reference to paid sexual services because the average reader would recognise the offer and thus the advertisement for prostitution.[577]

In practice, local regulatory authorities often weighed up the usefulness of allowing this 'less objectionable' residential prostitution to flourish, rather than encouraging women to turn to the streets. Therefore, whilst the risk of repercussions remained, classified ads endured as a central way to make contact with clients. With the new focus on the publisher of immoral ads, however, newspapers often demanded higher prices to compensate the risk.[578] Although the *Berliner Zeitung* continued to publish call-girl and brothel ads after 1975, they reportedly raised the prices for publication, illustrating the—both literal and figurative—costs of criminalisation for those in the sex industry.[579]

Call-girl work relied on an individual's access to a private, normally separate, apartment. This economic prerequisite likely entrenched further divides in who could engage in call-girl prostitution. In 1977, the guide *Mademoiselle* told its readers that call-girls, who could charge more than their colleagues on the streets or in a 'residence', were rarely non-German: 'Foreign women are scarce, occasionally a Dutch woman gets lost over the border'.[580] Although call-girl ads often mentioned nationalities, references to 'French' or 'English' women typically functioned as codes for certain sexual practices.[581] By 1980, however, Pat said of call-girl work in Hamburg that she knew of a growing number of Thai-born and Black immigrant women advertising apartment work, suggesting that *Mademoiselle*'s statement did not reflect all women in call-girl work.[582]

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[575] 'Teure Werbung', *Der Spiegel*, 06.07.1975.
[576] *Mademoiselle: zwischen Rhein und Ruhr* (Berlin, 1977), 6.
[577] Kreuzer, *Prostitution*, 128.
[578] Ibid., 128, 197.
[579] 'Teure Werbung'.
[580] *Mademoiselle*, 7.
[581] Kahmann/Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution*, 86.
[582] Biermann, *Wir sind Frauen!*, 40.

For women able to engage in call-girl work over other forms of sexual labour, the flexibility, time, and comfort possible in this form were repeatedly cited as positives. In West Berlin in 1981, Kim detailed working in a flat with one colleague and compared it to her previous work on the streets:

> In the apartment is a much easier job than on the street. We sit comfortably in our private room, talk, drink tea, coffee, or juices—all for our health, after all we have to be fit for our poor, stress-ridden guests who are oh so neglected by their better halves and girlfriends.[583]

For her, working in a private apartment enabled a different kind of freedom, allowing for time to rest and recuperate in the breaks between meeting clients. Others emphasised that working as a call-girl meant that they could 'be their own boss' and choose their own clients.[584]

Call-girls typically spent a longer time with clients and charged higher prices accordingly. *Mademoiselle* told its readers that around half of all call-girls offered extra time and services beyond the sexual encounters themselves, including shower access for clients or simply longer conversations. In interviews call-girls detailed the need to engage emotionally, simulating a genuine relationship, meaning that their interactions with clients differed significantly to street prostitution.[585] As for the sex itself, *Mademoiselle* found that practices to mimic or minimise sex were rare:

> the number of those […] who for example use tricks common in the industry during oral sex or "Falle schieben" during intercourse, is vanishingly small.[586]

As well as the risk of police intervention, typically triggered by advertisements or by neighbours reporting unusual activity, women who worked alone faced the risk of client violence or theft. Typically, they were able to vet clients only through the sound of their voice on the telephone, and were not able to, as in street or brothel-based work, rely on support from colleagues to minimise threats and look to cultivate regular clients. For Pat, who opened this chapter, the risks entailed in working alone meant she avoided drinking alcohol with the clients despite their requests: 'I need to keep a clear head […] I'm alone with the john in the flat, I need to stay on top of things.'[587]

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[583] 'Arbeits- und Berufswelt', *Hydra Nachtexpress*, 15.12.1981, 9.
[584] Kreuzer, *Prostitution*, 199.
[585] Ibid., 202.
[586] *Mademoiselle*, 9.
[587] Biermann, *Wir sind Frauen!*, 145.

Sexual labour as 'work-shy' behaviour

Notwithstanding the risks that selling sex could pose, many women throughout the period engaged in commercial sex professionally, either temporarily or for a prolonged period. When women turned to commercial sex, they often faced severe stigma, state intervention and coercive measures from local health offices, welfare workers and the police. Particularly in the 1950s and 1960s, intervention was often based on a series of socio-medical assumptions, which viewed and punished sexual labour as evidence of 'work-shy' or 'asocial' behaviour. Mothers who sold sex, for instance, could see their children removed from their care and placed in a reformatory, a measure also used to treat young girls deemed 'wayward'.

Although police and local administrators repeatedly acknowledged that many women turned to selling sex to supplement their income and provide for themselves as well as any dependents, they drew on a longer history of not considering sexual labour as legitimate work. During the Nazi period, this history of deeming prostitutes to be 'work-shy' or pathologizing them as 'asocial' had been taken to its extremes. Mass arrests accompanied the Nazi takeover, with practices of forced sterilisation or concentration camp imprisonment later applied to women deemed prostitutes.[588] At the same time, however, the regime reintroduced brothels, in cities but also for Wehrmacht soldiers and forced labourers. Within concentration camps, camp brothels were designed as a reward system for male inmates. Particularly female prisoners categorised as 'asocial', or those on record as prostitutes, were selected for camp brothel work.[589]

The most extreme consequences for so-called 'asocials' were no longer enacted in the Federal Republic, yet long-held understandings of commercial sex as immorality rather than labour, as well as much of the accompanying terminology, survived and influenced the treatment of women who sold sex.[590] Historian Matthias Willing has deemed Nazi-era measures of an 'importance that can hardly be overestimated' for the post-war period. He sees continuities in personnel and restrictive ideology as formative until the end of the 1960s.[591] Longer continuities are evident, on one level, in the

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[588] Gisela Bock, '"Keine Arbeitskräfte in diesem Sinne": Prostituierte im Nazi-Staat', in Biermann, *Wir sind Frauen!,* 85.

[589] Robert Sommer, 'Camp Brothels: Forced Sex Labour in Nazi Concentration Camps', in *Brutality and Desire: War and Sexuality in Europe's Twentieth Century*, ed. Dagmar Herzog (Basingstoke, 2009), 173.

[590] On 'asociality' in East Germany: Brüning, *Prostitution in der DDR*, 63, 297.

[591] Matthias Willing, 'Zwangsbewahrung: Fürsorgerische Freiheitsentziehung im bundesdeutschen Rechtsstaat', in *Kinder- und Jugendpsychatrie im Nationalsozialismus und in der Nachkriegszeit*, ed. Heiner Fangerau, Sascha Topp, and Klaus Schepker (Berlin, 2017), 467.

prevailing legal situation in West Germany, where selling sex was not illegal but defined as immoral (*sittenwidrig*). This distinction excluded those who sold sex from the protections of the welfare state: protections such as unemployment benefit, or membership of the state health and pension systems. Yet, legal terms could also embody the contradictions of *not* viewing commercial sex as legitimate work. Until 1973, West German law referred to prostitution as *gewerbsmässige Unzucht*, a term that can be roughly translated as 'professional debauchery' and points directly to its commercial nature.[592]

The interpretation of prostitution as 'work-shy' behaviour was evident in the courts and the media in the new West German state after 1949. In 1957, Dr Jäger of the Cologne prosecutor's office described street-based prostitution as

> particularly dangerous, because the prostitutes can pursue prostitution without much effort, so that above all the unstable girls who are work-shy or unwilling to work easily succumb to the temptation to earn their living in this way.[593]

In the same year correspondence from North-Rhine Westphalia's Minister of the Interior argued 'the possibilities for prostitutes to adapt to society seem very limited, since the majority of them can be regarded as work-shy, sexually unhinged [*triebentgleiste*] psychopaths'.[594]

Similar assumptions emerge in court judgements. When 71 year-old Erna S.* was prosecuted for *Kuppelei* in West Berlin in April 1959 the courts assessed: 'She has never done honest work in her life, but has either pursued prostitution or rented rooms to prostitutes'.[595] Both her character and the work she did was found wanting, as the court declared: 'The defendant is an asocial figure'.[596] Her conviction rested on her occasionally renting rooms in her two-room flat to two prostitute women.

West German courts, police, health and welfare offices continued to interpret commercial sex as evidence of an individual's 'work-shy' nature, even though the sex industry was frequently enmeshed in the local economy. Hamburg's marketing of St. Pauli, for instance, rested on the area's disreputability, whilst influential businesspeople, including Manfred Weissleder, founder and owner of the Star club (of Beatles fame), had significant commercial interests in the sex trade.[597] Whilst business interests could

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[592] This dates back to the 1896 criminal code—§361,6—and remained in law until 1973, when 'Unzucht' was replaced with 'sexuelle Handlung': Krafft, *Zucht und Unzucht*, 9.
[593] Acc-734-A68, HAStK, 12.
[594] *Anlage,* 20.08.1957, 4, B-106-17303, BArch.
[595] 'Gründe für Verwerfung der Berufung', B-Rep-065-306, LAB.
[596] Ibid.
[597] Julia Sneeringer, 'Sites of Corruption, Sites of Liberation: Hamburg-St. Pauli and the Contested Spaces of Early Rock'n'Roll', *CEH*, 26/2 (2017), 316.

directly profit from commercial sex, the interpretation of prostitution as 'work-shy' behaviour had significant consequences for the treatment of women who sold sex, reaching from everyday discriminations to admission to a reformatory.

The workhouse

In addition to fines or prison sentences for prostitution-related offences, throughout the 1960s, women who sold sex faced the threat of admission to a workhouse (*Arbeitshaus*). The workhouses were tied to the criminal justice system, and understood as an alternative to prison, applicable after conviction for specific offences, defined not as a punishment but a measure for their 'improvement'.[598] Unlike the prison, the workhouses had the re-education of inmates as their ostensible aim; a workhouse stay was applied to those convicted of begging, vagrancy (*Landstreicherei*) or prostitution offences, to bring about a 'betterment' of their character and lead them to a life of 'honest' work.[599]

The use of workhouses and detention for these purposes predated Nazi and even Weimar Germany. Indeed, similar institutions for reforming prostitutes have been implemented across the globe from around the nineteenth century.[600] A paragraph dating back to the German empire allowed for prostitutes to be sent to the workhouse to, through 'strict discipline [*Zucht*]' and hard work, teach them an orderly life.[601] Traditionally, prostitutes had been amongst the target groups for workhouse admission, alongside beggars and vagrants. Parallels are evident with English criminal statutes against the 'common prostitute', which developed out of vagrancy laws. As Judith Walkowitz has argued, in this case, 'prostitute's legal status bore the taint of the outcast stripped of civil personality and constitutional rights'[602] In Germany, Weimar-era legal changes, however, which decriminalised prostitution and shifted the focus on commercial sex as a health issue, had also removed the legal basis for sending women to the workhouse on prostitution offences.[603] Nevertheless, women who sold sex

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[598] 'Besserung durch das Arbeitshaus?', *Concepte*, Acc-672-A13, HAStK. Unlike British workhouses, their purpose as an institution was not to offer accommodation and employment to those unable to support themselves.

[599] Harald Ojasson, 'Sinnvolles Arbeiten gehört zur Erziehung', *K-StA*, 16.12.1961, 15111, ALVR.

[600] The 'retraining' of women ostensibly 'rescued' from prostitution to provide cheap labour provides parallels with the institutional laundries of Britain, Ireland, India and North America. See: Hetherington and Laite, 'Trafficking, a Useless Category?', 18; Frances Finnegan, *Do Penance or Perish: A Study of Magdalen Asylums in Ireland* (Piltown, Co. Kilkenny, 2001).

[601] Willing, 'Zwangsbewahrung', 466.

[602] Walkowitz/Walkowitz, 'We Are Not Beasts', 75.

[603] Föcking, *Fürsorge im Wirtschafttsboom*, 439.

continued to be admitted under various premises. Under Nazi rule, women who had undergone a venereal disease examination were held in the workhouse on the tenuous basis that they had received welfare benefits.[604] Overall, measures regarding workhouses were made stricter during this period, making it easier to detain people and removing the restrictions on maximum internment length.[605] Historian Wolfgang Ayaß argues that the workhouse in this period was no longer used to improve its inmates, but instead to enable the life-long imprisonment of those deemed 'asocial' elements. At the same time as the workhouse was being made harsher, however, it lost its importance in the face of other extreme measures, such as the interment of 'asocials' in concentration camps, or their forced sterilisation.[606]

Despite the use of workhouses to further Nazi ideology, these institutions survived both the Allied occupation and the early years of the Federal Republic. In the years 1946-49, eighty-seven per cent of the inmates of the Breitenau workhouse near Kassel were female. Here, the courts applied the offence of vagrancy (*Landstreicherei*), which had previously primarily been used on men, to admit women who had no evidence of venereal disease but who had perhaps lived together with Allied soldiers.[607] Although the US administration removed forced workhouse admission within its own occupation zone, the British zone which housed Cologne and Hamburg did not follow.[608] Throughout the 1960s, the workhouse offered a means to control women's sexual activity.

The foundation of the Federal Republic of Germany represented a significant shift in the laws and rights accorded to the individual. The introduction of Basic Law guaranteed that the 'freedom of the person shall be inviolable'. Under this framework, forcible admission into an institution needed a judge's ruling, a hurdle to detaining individuals outside of the prison against their will.[609] Yet individual rights were restricted once again in August 1953, when a criminal code modification reintroduced the workhouse in all federal states, permitting internment lengths reaching four years for repeated offences.[610] This did not restore admission into a workhouse explicitly on

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[604] Wolfgang Ayaß, *Das Arbeitshaus Breitenau: Bettler, Landstreicher, Prostituierte, Zuhälter und Fürsorgeempfänger in der Korrektions- und Landarmenanstalt Breitenau (1874-1949)* (Kassel, 1992), 284.
[605] Ibid., 267–69.
[606] Ibid., 313.
[607] Ibid., 336.
[608] Willing, 'Zwangsbewahrung', 468.
[609] Ibid., 469.
[610] Föcking, *Fürsorge im Wirtschafttsboom*, 358.

prostitution offences, yet women who sold sex continued to be interred on other premises.[611]

In Cologne, city administrators, alongside members of the police, prosecutor's office and various welfare agencies, felt that judges did not send enough prostitutes to the workhouse. To rectify the situation, they organised a lecture and tour of the workhouse for local judges in 1957.[612] These attempts were supported by legal change in 1961. Sixteen years after the end of Nazi rule and thirty-four years since admission to the workhouse on prostitution offences had been abolished in Weimar Germany, a criminal code modification reinstated the workhouse as a direct consequence of prostitution offences, more specifically for women who contravened the new *Sperrbezirke* or restricted areas introduced in towns and cities across the FRG. The proportion of young women on prostitution or prostitution-related offences admitted to West German workhouses grew into the late 1960s, up until the abolishment of workhouses in law in 1969.[613]

Conditions in a West German workhouse varied according to the institution, and in turn, depended on the federal state. With some workhouses closed in the post-war years, workhouse divisions were installed directly in prisons. By 1967, the largest of the thirteen remaining workhouses in the FRG was in Brauweiler, near Cologne. It held around half of all West German workhouse inmates, with most of the female inmates there on prostitution offences (primarily street prostitution).[614] Women held in Brauweiler in the late 1960s were required to work a forty-four-hour week in 'women's' professions such as weaving, dressmaking, or in the laundry, for which they earnt a negligible sum. They slept in shared rooms, containing up to thirty beds. Leisure-time activities, such as watching television in the communal areas, were permitted but all inmates were locked in their rooms by 8.30pm. Remuneration, work forms, or freedoms differed depending on the workhouse; around sixteen inmates in the Hamburg-based Anstalt Neuengamme were tasked with making electric plugs.[615] It is evident, however, that workhouse measures aimed at moulding prostitutes to conform a specific model of femininity and the female worker.

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[611] Lindner, *Gesundheitspolitik*, 339.
[612] Acc-734-A68, HAStK, 10.
[613] Willing, 'Zwangsbewahrung', 476.
[614] This had been the case pre-1927: Hermann Daners and Josef Wißkirchen, *Die Arbeitsanstalt Brauweiler bei Köln in nationalsozialistischer Zeit* (Essen, 2013), 48. Frankfurt women were sent to Brauweiler, until a Frankfurt-based solution was found in the mid-1960s: Kreuzer, *Prostitution*, 108.
[615] 'Aus der Schublade', *Der Spiegel*, 19.02.1967, 49.

Despite Brauweiler's director, Rudolf Müller, insisting in 1966 that the workhouse sentence was not a punishment, conditions in Brauweiler and elsewhere indicate that it functioned as an element of state violence and the exploitation of marginalised individuals in West German society. In 1965 the *Kölner-Stadt-Anzeiger* asked 'Does the state keep slaves?' regarding the low pay given to prison inmates.[616] Workhouse inmates received similar low pay, except here their sentence length was not decided before admission. Instead, detainees faced a maximum sentence of two years (or four years for any subsequent stays). The possibility for release was considered around every six months in cohort with the courts, where an individual's behaviour, conduct and 'work performance' was assessed.[617] In the meantime, inmates were required to produce for low remuneration during a period of acknowledged labour shortages, their involvement in low-paid labour a prerequisite to them leaving the workhouse before the legally-prescribed maximum sentence.

Although some women were repeatedly sentenced to the workhouse, the overall numbers of workhouse admissions across the 1960s remained low. In 1966 there were 402 workhouse admissions in West Germany, and only 233 in 1968. By the end of the 1960s this left around 900 inmates in total.[618] While admission numbers seem small relative to the general population, Willing argues that we should not underestimate the significance of the workhouse's 'threat potential', enacted on a far larger scale against women who sold sex.[619] Arrest reports and health office records evidence the use of this 'threat potential' when women caught selling sex did not cooperate.[620] In 1957, officers warned Leni B.* she could be sent to the workhouse after they caught her entering a car at Cologne's Kaiser-Friedrich-Ufer. She had told officers that she would keep selling sex even if it meant 3 years imprisonment. The threat seems to have achieved its desired effect, as reports document that Leni soon repented her statement, putting it down to her 'anger' at having been caught again and informing officers of her intention to begin a 'different, better life'.[621]

For young women deemed to be prostitutes or 'at risk' of being so, the workhouse was often used by authorities as leverage to achieve their ostensibly

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[616] 'Hält der Staat sich Sklaven?', *K-StA*, 1965, 15111, ALVR.
[617] 'Besserung durch das Arbeitshaus?', *Concepte*, Acc-672-A13, HAStK.
[618] Willing, 'Zwangsbewahrung', 476.
[619] Ibid., 477.
[620] In Hamburg, a doctor reportedly threatened patients in a closed hospital ward with the workhouse, unless they agreed to take over the costs: 'Der Beamte der Sozialverwaltung', 351-10-II-2405, StHH.
[621] Arrest report (LB), 27.08.1957, Acc-194-A57, HAStK.

voluntary stay in a reformatory. Far more women were confined to such reformatories than to the West German workhouses.[622] This was applied to teenagers and young women, mostly aged between fourteen and eighteen years, but stretching to age twenty-one. Often the reformatories were run by the protestant or catholic churches, the buildings themselves in a poor state, with unskilled staff. Some homes offered career training opportunities for inmates, yet these were limited. Regulations focussed on discipline and order, cleanliness and obedience, with the 'education to work' as their aim, through the implementation of strictly-regimented schedules and exhausting labour. Former residents (known as *Heimkinder*) recall these institutions as brutal, and claim that the resulting trauma defined their lives. Despite variety between individual personnel and institutions, Willing identifies the situation faced by detainees in the post-war period up until the late 1960s as 'grossly deficient and inhumane'.[623] These homes remained in use throughout the period.[624] Both reformatories and the workhouse illustrate that state violence permeated and shaped women's experience of commercial sex and the consequences for not fitting certain expectations of womanhood.

Over the course of the 1960s, repressive measures—including the forced admission in an institution—were questioned in popular culture. In a 1966 interview, Brauweiler's director was asked to comment on the following statement: 'Those who deal with the problem of prostitution today will […] come to the conclusion that the workhouse no longer has any significant importance'.[625] This shift has been attributed to numerous developments. Politically, the conservative dominance of the CDU/CSU parties slowly faded, whilst the national socialist past entered the public consciousness. At the same time, the old guard entered pensionable age, whilst the extra-parliamentary opposition and student protests politicised the social climate.[626] An increasingly critical West German media culture, as evident in the *Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger* headline above, may also have played a role in this shift.[627]

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[622] Willing, 'Zwangsbewahrung', 477. The number of youths in care (*Fürsorgezöglinge*) numbered in the 100,000s. For an example of the workhouse's 'threat potential' being used in this manner, see: *Niederschrift Sitzung Arbeitsgemeinschaft zur Bekämpfung der* […] *Prostitution*, 15.06.1955, Acc-646-A16, HAStK.

[623] Willing, 'Zwangsbewahrung', 477.

[624] Hamburg abolished its reformatories in the mid-1980s.

[625] 'Besserung durch das Arbeitshaus?', *Concepte*, Acc-672-A13, HAStK.

[626] Willing, 'Zwangsbewahrung', 479–80.

[627] Christina von Hodenberg, 'Mass Media and the Generation of Conflict: West Germany's Long Sixties and the Formation of a Critical Public Sphere', *CEH*, 15/3 (2006), 367–95.

The direct impetus for the federal law change came in the form of legal challenges to the provisions for forced admittance of individuals to institutions (*Zwangsbewahrung*) under the guise of welfare as enshrined in the 1961 Social Assistance Act (*Bundessozialhilfe Gesetz*). It was challenged in the Federal Constitutional Court by the SPD-led states Hamburg, Hesse and Lower Saxony, with the judgement of 18 July 1967 finding that:

> the forced placement of an adult in an institution or home, which serves neither the protection of the general public nor the protection of the person concerned, but exclusively his 'betterment', is unconstitutional.[628]

Although focussed on forcible reformatory admission, the judgement in this case has been described as a 'death sentence' for the workhouse.[629] As part of wider-reaching criminal code reforms, workhouse admission as detailed in the criminal code was abolished in September 1969.[630] The workhouse remained a measure to imprison 'work-shy' welfare recipients until the March 1974 reform of the Social Assistance Act.[631]

The abolition of the workhouses represented a liberalisation for women who sold sex in West Germany. Yet, if we consider the wider restrictions on their labour—including its continued criminalisation—it is evident that women who sold sex continued to face significant stigma, their labour still not legally deemed to be legitimate work.

Taxing sex

In 1964, as women were still being sent to the workhouse as prostitutes, their income through selling sex became liable to taxation. A decision at the Federal Finance Court found that prostitution had a 'professional character' and as such the income of women who sold sex was taxable. Importantly, however, prostitution was not recognised as a profession (*Beruf*). Any taxes paid were to be classified as 'other revenue'.[632]

Making income from prostitution taxable did not negate its legal status as immoral (*sittenwidrig*), which continued to hold significant weight in civil law. The West German courts, resting on §138,1 ('a legal transaction that is contrary to good morals is invalid') found that any contract between a prostitute and her client, due to its immoral nature, was void.[633] This peculiar situation led judges to recommend that

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[628] Quoted in Willing, 'Zwangsbewahrung', 479.
[629] Ibid., 480.
[630] Ayaß, *Arbeitshaus Breitenau*, 345.
[631] Willing, 'Zwangsbewahrung', 480.
[632] Kahmann/Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution*, 47.
[633] Ibid., 48.

prostitutes demand advance payment, as they would have no legal recourse to demand payment after the fact. Conversely, clients were permitted to demand the contract be fulfilled or accuse women of fraud (*Betrug*).[634]

By refusing to recognise commercial sex as a profession, West German law excluded women who sold sex from labour protection rights. Employment contracts between a brothel owner and a prostitute—because they went against good morals—were deemed void.[635] This categorisation prevented women who sold sex from participating in and benefitting from the structures of the welfare state, including the system of health insurance, pension schemes and the unemployment insurance system.[636] Exclusion from state health insurance meant that women who sold sex typically had to pay the costs for any health treatment they received out of their own funds. This led many to forgo a visit to the doctor in times of illness, often instead choosing to keep working.[637] At the same time, those who took time off, typically still had to pay general costs accrued when working, such as brothel rent, without recourse to social security support. With their previous career not recognised by the authorities, women looking to leave commercial sex, having not paid into unemployment insurance, were excluded from many job centre provisions, including unemployment benefits.[638]

Whilst employment contracts were deemed void, surrounding contracts such as brothel contracts for rent remained legitimate. Owners and managers of Eros-Centers could legitimately pay taxes and thus remain integrated in the welfare system.[639] The 'immorality' of commercial sex therefore overwhelmingly impacted only women who sold sex, and not managers or clients who were similarly integral to the West German sex industry.

Two cases culminating in the Higher Regional Court Düsseldorf in 1970, and the Federal Court of Justice in 1976, show this trend shift slightly. The cases addressed the question of compensation for prostitutes regarding damages or lost earnings. They found that the loss of earnings through prostitution, such as through a traffic accident, should be seen as legally compensable damages, for a prostitute's income was protected property. The Federal Court of Justice considered the state's toleration and taxation of

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[634] Kreuzer, *Prostitution*, 130.
[635] Ibid., 130.
[636] Heying, *Huren in Bewegung*, 34.
[637] Kahmann/Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution*, 91; Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 196.
[638] Kreuzer, *Prostitution*, 130.
[639] Ibid., 131.

prostitution decisive in its 1976 decision.[640] How far these legal decisions directly ameliorated the working conditions of women who sold sex is unclear.

Despite developments in the rights and responsibilities facing women who sold sex, prostitution was legally seen neither as a free profession (*freier Beruf*) or as a trade (*Gewerbe*) throughout the period. This was, as Kahmann and Lanzerath argued in 1981, 'despite all criteria of a trade being present; because a trade is generally defined as an activity that is permitted by the legal system, is continued on a sustained basis, is carried out independently and is directed outwards'.[641] Commercial sex continued to occupy an uneasy and incoherent place both within and outside of West Germany's organising structures. Women who sold sex were now liable to taxation, but crucially remained excluded from the rights and support that a recognition of their labour would give them.

Conclusions

The parameters of sexual labour shifted over the period in question. Women who sold sex in the late 1970s rarely did so in the former brothel streets. Hamburg's Herbertstraße, in its role as tourist attraction, proved an exception here, while other brothel streets were slowly closed down and the residents evicted. In Cologne and Hamburg, the former brothel streets were largely replaced by the new Eros-Centers, yet women continued in great numbers to sell sex dispersed across the city. In West Berlin, although street prostitution remained popular throughout the period, it is possible to identify changes in who was selling sex on the street, most notably after 1961 when the Berlin Wall ended the popular daily migration of East German women to sell sex on the streets of Charlottenburg. In each of the three cities, women turned to work as call-girls or in underground brothels. As they did so, the services and time expected of them also shifted. Solidarity and aid amongst colleagues, when practiced, could be central to how women viewed and experienced their engagement in sexual labour.

Significantly, by the 1970s, women who sold sex no longer faced the prospect of admission in a workhouse due to their character being deemed 'work-shy'. These changes had come slowly, with workhouses surviving well past the Federal Republic's early years. The language of the courts, as well as the continued reality of admission into a reformatory or workhouse for the purpose of a woman's betterment in direct response to her participation in commercial sex illustrates the large burden faced by those seeking recognition of their occupation as work. Even after the workhouses were

[640] Kahmann/Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution*, 47.
[641] Ibid., 48.

abolished, commercial sex was rarely viewed as work by the institutions women who sold sex came into contact with. When police departments, city authorities or the courts referred to the work of commercial sex, terms such as 'work', 'trade', 'professional', or 'commercial' appeared often, yet were typically framed by quotation marks.

Although the workhouse gradually lost importance, state intervention in commercial sex by health offices, welfare workers, and the police continued. Women who sold sex continued to face the burden of venereal disease control or repercussions from the criminal justice system for pursuing their profession. The weight of these burdens fell more heavily for those whose work was more visible, such as in the 'prostitute residences' or on the streets, in contrast to those in underground brothels or undertaking call-girl work. The evictions from the former brothel streets were designed to encourage the move to the Eros-Centers, and pushed women who sold sex into circumstances which decreased their independence and flexibility whilst simultaneously increasing costs and competition.

When the women of Cologne's Kleine Brinkgasse were evicted in 1972, Geraldine D., a resident of the street, was quoted in a local newspaper as saying; 'Nobody asked us what we want, even though we pay taxes too.'[642] Because the voices of women who sold sex were so rarely consulted in discussions on commercial sex, it remains difficult to retrospectively assess how they viewed their engagement in sexual labour. Comments like Geraldine's, however, indicate a demand to be included as participants in the discussion, justified here through her existing participation in the taxation system. Indeed, women who sold sex occupied a confused and contradictory position in the welfare system, liable to taxation but excluded from a range of social security protections. When women who sold sex in West Berlin began to organise politically around 1980, recognising transactional sex as work became a central demand. They challenged the legal definition of prostitution as immoral, and demanded not only to pay into but to be included in the protections of the welfare state.

Throughout the period local authorities in West Germany repeatedly showed little appreciation of the wider situation or circumstances that led women to sell sex, such as gaps in the welfare system or hidden poverty. Relying on existing assumptions, and without consulting women who sold sex, they also routinely overlooked the benefits that selling sex could offer women, benefits including higher pay and flexible working hours. Often, they focussed on evidence of violence or exploitation that women faced

[642] Günther Braun, 'Abschied von dem Liebesgäßchen', *EXPRESS*, 07.01.1972.

when selling sex, seeing women who sold sex as embroiled in a criminal underground. This perception, and its impact on those who sold sex and their partners, forms the basis of the following chapter.

4. Crime

In December 1955, in a bar in Berlin's Augsburgerstraße, three men cornered Angelika W.* and accused her of having reported their friend (Johann R.*) to the police for pimping. Sat close to the music box, they ordered eight slices of bread and proceeded to force-feed Angelika. At any sign of pause, they slapped her face. One of the men reportedly held a knife to her throat and threatened to cut her hair off, another kicked her. On leaving the bar, Angelika was then attacked by a woman, who hit her on the head with her shoe. The men brought Angelika back into the bar and poured a cognac over the wound. They then threatened a further woman who had supposedly also reported her pimp to the police with the same treatment.[643]

It is uncertain how this attack came to be noticed by officers of the West Berlin *Kripo.* Perhaps Angelika turned to the same men that had taken her statement on Johann R., or perhaps a witness in the bar that December evening reported the events. Yet noticed it was, and Angelika's beating later appeared as evidence on the presence of organised criminal groups of pimps in the city, the police response cited as a decisive intervention against the so-called 'Augsburger Straße pimps', a group of at least 15 pimps and 'their' prostitutes. From then on, so the police argued, the men rarely worked as a group, although many continued to come into contact with the police under suspicion of pimping.[644]

The events of December 1955 also resurfaced as the subject of a further police document: a thin booklet seemingly intended for a smaller informal audience of police officers. Most likely created by an officer of the vice police, the booklet incorporates mugshots and typed descriptions, doodles and cartoon-like pencil illustrations which depict Angelika in the bar and Johann behind bars **[see A.2.]**.

This document was not created as typical police record-keeping. Rather, the collage format and illustrations imply it was produced and circulated by officers as a joke. Its existence suggests that police officers engaged in the organised collective mockery of those they policed. Cases of pimp violence, fodder for outrage in the press, when encountered in reality saw little sympathy for those who featured as the victim. Instead, Angelika was summarised as a collection of her past crimes: indecent prostitution, theft, homelessness, physical assault, embezzlement. She, as much as those

[643] 'Zuhälterbande aus der Augsburger Straße', *Unterweltvereine,* PHS.
[644] Ibid.

who carried out the assault, or Johann imprisoned on pimping charges, was depicted as criminal. The booklet, with its cartoons and collages, illustrates clearly the disregard in which those involved, including Angelika herself, were held by members of West Berlin's police force.

One page is titled in large handwritten letters: '"Snitches" – have to eat dry bread!'. In choosing to focus on the dry bread, the author(s) belittled the violence that Angelika faced at the hand of the three men. The booklet illustrates how individual police officers could decide both what constituted violence and who deserved sympathy. Even when a woman who sold sex reported a man to the police for pimping, she was not classed as worthy of respect or care. Instead, police officers focussed on Angelika's criminal record rather than the crime at hand. Having made past choices that the officers disagreed with, she had seemingly forfeited the right to victimhood herself. Within the document there is conspicuously little acknowledgement that she faced this violence as direct repercussion for engaging with the police and the legal system.

This case, and the police responses, highlight numerous themes that guide this chapter. It exposes a central tension in the relationship between police officers and women who sold sex. Alongside police understandings and expectations of prostitute women as criminal, they could also be, and often were, victims of crime. These twin relationships feature as a thread running through the following exploration. The nuances of violence, and the power of who gets to define its boundaries, shall build a further theme. The chapter ends by exploring the intersections of the policing of drug use and migration with the policing of prostitution.

The vice police

The officers who worked on Angelika's case most likely formed part of West Berlin's *Sitte* or vice police, tasked with policing prostitution, pimping and a whole host of sexual and morality crimes. Vice police existed in all larger police divisions across West Germany. Although structurally independent from one another, departments kept in contact, exchanged strategies and collaborated on cases across city boundaries. Individual officers from Hamburg and West Berlin took part in a formal three-month exchange. Hamburg's vice police documented their close, often personal, relationships with the Berlin officers. They noted visits from their Berlin colleagues and families, bowling evenings, dances and trips.[645] These personal and social connections existed in

[645] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1967-1972, 331-1II-2681, StHH.

addition to cooperative work between city vice divisions, which responded to the mobility of those they policed.

Cologne, Hamburg and West Berlin each had a substantial vice police throughout all or most of the period under consideration in this work. West Berlin's vice police made up part of the *Kripo*'s 'special group M', alongside the division for investigating homicides, and the WKP department of female officers, who primarily worked on cases involving children and young women. Although former officers of the vice police later claimed they had relinquished responsibility for the surveillance of prostitution to the health office from 1958 onwards, there is much evidence that the Berlin vice police continued to police women who sold sex after this date.[646] The vice police's 'prostitute index', which included photographs, nicknames, details of where women worked and if they had a pimp, continued to be used and updated until at least August 1966.[647] In fact, prostitute self-help group Hydra assumed in 1984 that Berlin police continued to regularly update an internal prostitute index.[648] Undercover vice police officers also regularly visited bars in search of evidence of pimping and procurement. [649]

Officers of Cologne's *Sittenkommissariat* or Hamburg's *Kriminalinspektion IID* worked similarly. The continued and organised policing of prostitution can be seen clearly in the structure of the Hamburg vice police. Its officers were divided into four categories: D1 concentrated on pornography (*Schund und Schmutz*), D2 on pimping and the theft of sexual partners (*Beischlafdiebstahl*), D3 on commercial sex, procurement, and the Law on Combatting Venereal Diseases (GBG), and D4 on homosexuality and child sexual abuse.[650] The divisions thus explicitly covered crimes committed by as well as against prostitute women, a tension that determined the policing of commercial sex.

West Germany's vice divisions had a long history stretching back to state-regulated prostitution and, despite Allied attempts to implement a break in police structures from the Nazi period, local vice police departments were immediately re-established.[651] Continuities in personnel are likely, continuities in practice clearly evident. For Cologne, the Nazi past of the two successive heads of the *Kripo*, Oskar Wenzky (1952-1959) and Karl Kiehne (1959-1969) is well-established in the

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[646] Klös/Klös, 'Von der "Sitte"', 87-89.
[647] *Prostituiertenkartei*, PHS.
[648] 'Der Staat & die Prostituierten', 58.
[649] Klös/Klös, 'Von der "Sitte"', 91.
[650] 'Jahresübersicht 1955', *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1953-1963, 331-1II-2679.
[651] Berlin's 'special group M' was operating in 1946: Dobler, 'Die Berliner Polizei', 251.

historiography.[652] As such, personnel continuities in the vice police, itself a sub-section of the *Kripo*, would be unsurprising. For Hamburg, a surviving vice police chronicle records police officers whose careers stretched back into the 1940s, whilst general studies of Hamburg's police force evidence that, despite initial denazification efforts, by 1959 around 1,600 suspended officers had been reinstated.[653] The chronicle records the retirement of a Hamburg officer in October 1966, documenting his involvement in vice policing since 1942 and praising his 'wealth of experience'.[654] The recruitment of Weimar-era officers in post-war denazification efforts, also importantly indicates longer continuities in vice policing.[655]

Laws and regulations often classified prostitution as a responsibility of the health offices, yet vice police divisions across West Germany persisted in associating women who sold sex with a criminal underground, which included a focus on crimes committed by and against prostitutes. By continuing to observe, record and police women who sold sex, the work of the vice police served to code the sale of sex and the women who did so as criminal. In combination with the policing of public space by *Schupo* officers, women who sold sex typically had frequent interactions with the criminal justice system.

To police and protect? Police officers and women who sold sex

The laws and regulations governing commercial sex, and the resulting forms of policing, typically lead to a level of familiarity between vice police or patrolling *Shupo* officers and the women they policed. References to this familiarity and the resulting difficulties in undercover work appear repeatedly in police sources. Officers of West Berlin's vice police were often recognised, although sometimes assumed to be clients. Consequently, vice police officers took part in 'mixed' patrols with female officers to

[652] Noethen, *Alte Kameraden*, 330. This is conspicuously absent from Kiehne's autobiography; Karl Kiehne, *Nicht nur Rosen aus dem Klingelpütz: Ein Kripochef berichtet aus seinem Leben* (Munich, 1972).

[653] They did so under article 131 of West German Basic Law: Klaus Weinhauer, *Schutzpolizei in der Bundesrepublik: Zwischen Bürgerkrieg und Innerer Sicherheit* (Paderborn, 2003), 124. In West Berlin, despite initial denazification efforts, former NSDAP members were reinstated: Dobler, 'Die Berliner Polizei', 253.

[654] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1963-1967, 331-1II-2680, StHH.

[655] Weinhauer, *Schutzpolizei in der Budesrepublik*, 125. See: Erwin Boldt, *Die verschenkte Reform: Der Neuaufbau der Hamburger Polizei zwischen Weimarer Tradition und den Vorgaben der britischen Besatzungsmacht 1945-1955* (Hamburg, 2002).

appear as a romantic couple.[656] An article about Cologne's vice police officer Dünges recounted his attempts to dress as a woman undercover.[657]

For women who worked in 'prostitute residences', rather than those who worked primarily on the streets, the relationship with police officers was not necessarily one of repeated arrests. Indeed, whilst researchers in the mid-1970s deemed the relationship between prostitutes and police in Hamburg to be generally negative—in particular for street-working women—they found relationships to the women in Herbertstraße to be rather positive. Many Herbertstraße women, they claimed, viewed police officers as their helpers, leaving police to deal with a wide variety of problems to retain trust.[658] In this context, in March 1974, women of Hamburg's Herbertstraße called on vice police officers to help catch an escaped python and together they brought the snake to the animal shelter.[659] Perhaps this different relationship accounts for a 1980 letter from one of the Herbertstraße inhabitants to an officer informing him that she was leaving the job and thanking him 'for the understanding that you always had for me'.[660] More positive relationships were likely also welcomed by police officers themselves; in 1980 Hans-Jürgen Thierbach of Hamburg's vice police referred to the street as 'Mother Herbertstraße', expressing hope that, when he became the most senior officer, he would, as was customary, be given the road as his responsibility. [661] In Cologne, there also appears to have been a level of familiarity between prostitute women and police officers, which could result in tongue-in-cheek nicknames; Dünges, whom we encountered above dressing as a woman undercover, was reportedly known as 'Papa', and he occasionally received postcards from women who sold sex away on holiday.[662]

Nevertheless, police presence was not without its risks for the women of the prostitute residences as criminal investigations could see vice police turn to their resident lists for suspects.[663] When the first large-scale 'prostitute residences' or Eros-Centers emerged across West Germany in the late 1960s and early 1970s, they were soon seen by police and in the media as hubs of criminal activity. Police noted that it was necessary to place Cologne's *Eros-Center* under observation from the very beginning, including again keeping a list of all women who worked there as prostitutes,

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[656] Klös/Klös, 'Von der "Sitte"', 91-92.
[657] Björn Held, 'Kripo mit Kopftuch', *K-StA*, 08.10.1966, 13.
[658] Kahmann/Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution*, 93.
[659] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1972-1977, 331-1II-2682, StHH.
[660] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1978-1982, 331-1II-2683, StHH.
[661] Tschocke/Reiser, *Domenica*, 14.
[662] 'Feriengrüße', 17.
[663] Gerichte-Rep-287-1961, LAV NRW.

as well as all men employed as security personnel. They argued that 'it is precisely these persons who are often the subject of residence investigations and arrest requests'.[664] This internal registration represents a continuation of regulationist practice in the police management of commercial sex, here enacted on the presumption that women who sold sex would likely become involved with criminal activity, as both victims and perpetrators.

Victims or perpetrators?

The document from West Berlin's *Kripo* which opened the chapter is one rare but illustrative example of inner-police dynamics and their views on those they policed. This brief insight into vice officers in Berlin is complemented by a far larger project from Hamburg. Here, officers collaborated to create the self-penned chronicles of the Hamburg vice police. These took the form of large volumes which covered the work of the department in the years since 1945 and were intended, in their words, to 'pass on a bit of recent history'.[665] Alongside details of promotions and retirements and photographs of work outings and parties, individual divisions of the department recorded select cases and included details and photographs of cases, such as violent assaults, often commented upon with a humorous tone.[666]

Within the chronicles, prostitutes featured both as criminals and victims. The crime of *Beischlafdiebstahl*, the theft of sexual partners, was seen as a crime primarily committed by prostitutes against their clients. The policing of this crime fell under the purview of the vice police. A 1965 report on criminality in West Berlin defined *Beischlafdiebstahl* as cases which use 'sexual moments' to commit the theft, but also cases 'where perpetrators and victims of different sexes meet for a joint pub crawl to visit places of pleasure etc., even if the victim was drunk at the time of the crime'.[667] Ostensibly, such thefts typically occurred when a client proffered large sums of money or was drunk and thus easier to steal from. Thefts of money rather than valuables were more common, as they proved harder for police investigations to trace.[668] In the Hamburg chronicles, vice police officers argued that perpetrators of this crime were ninety percent of the time prostitutes, whilst they described the other ten percent as 'respectable' women 'whose conduct is not always above reproach'. They suggested

[664] *Fahndung E* report, 12.01.1972, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.
[665] 'Vorwort', *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1945-52, 331-1II-2678, StHH.
[666] 331-1II-2678-2683, StHH.
[667] 'Grundeinteilung der Straftaten', 01.01.1965, 7, PHS.
[668] Kahmann/Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution*, 97.

women who sold sex undertook criminal acts with little consideration and claimed that 'to see the money and plan the deed is, for the perpetrator, just a single thought'. The chroniclers subsequently also described the typical perpetrator as 'mentally impaired'.[669] In doing so, they situated themselves in a longer history of pathologizing those who sell sex, or of deeming women who sold sex 'asocial'.[670] Understandings of prostitute women as criminal or mentally impaired likely fed into officers' more routine interactions, for instance the frequent police patrols through city streets and bars.

A further crime associated with prostitution was 'fraud (*Betrug*) on a sexual basis', in which women were accused of not providing the services for which they had been paid. It is likely that this was particularly linked to the process of *Nachkobern* in which a basic price was agreed upon between both parties, but all extra services (such as removing items of clothing) required further costs. In fraud cases, prostitutes were typically accused of demanding costs until the client refused to pay extra, at which point they would refuse any service in return. Contemporaries found that these were most common for women of 'prostitute residences', rather than call-girls who wished to build up a regular client base and avoid health office registration.[671]

Vice police officers used the understanding of women who sold sex as potential criminals or as less mentally competent to justify harsh treatment. In the second volume of the Hamburg chronicles, the authors recounted a case surrounding the alleged theft of a diamond ring, and their process of finding the woman responsible. They portrayed the case as a success story, despite, or perhaps because the officers in question admitted to playing four women against each other in a manner 'just at the limit of what's allowed' to extract a confession.[672] Instances such as these indicate a wider culture of police violence towards their subjects, encoded in tales deemed examples of successful policing.

The implications of police viewing women who sold sex as criminals for day-to-day policing were expressed in a seminar held at the central police leadership academy in Hiltrup, NRW, from 5-9 November 1973, the same month in which several criminal

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[669] 'Situation der Beischlafdiebstähle 1959', *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1953-1963, 331-1II-2679, StHH.

[670] Whilst this terminology predated the Nazi regime, it was implemented during this period, with serious consequences for those it targeted. Wolfgang Ayaß, *'Asoziale' im Nationalsozialismus* (Stuttgart, 1995).

[671] Kahmann/Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution*, 98.

[672] 'Ein "Beischlaf-Diebstahl"', *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1953-1963, 331-1II-2679, StHH.

code reforms—including a reform of the crime of pimping—were passed. The Hiltrup police academy was a site both for higher level police training, but also for research on policing in the FRG. Although policing in West Germany was a state matter, the academy has been viewed as significant in building a common philosophy of policing to span across the federal states.[673] The seminar in question was entitled 'Measures to effectively combat pimping' and included a working group of leading police officers and prosecutors who produced a paper of suggestions to be presented to a conference of interior ministers on the topic. They detailed recommendations for the structure and measures regarding pimping and related crimes in West Germany and in so doing exhibited again the tensions underlying police relations with women who sold sex.

The Hiltrup report stated that, to successfully beat pimping and procuring, the police needed to work preventatively, through the surveillance of prostitutes and sites of prostitution. Significantly, they argued that current legislation was far from sufficient and recommended a return to the regulationist practice of requiring prostitutes to register with the vice police, abolished in 1927.[674] The paper also explicitly demanded the right for police officers to enter rooms used for prostitution at all times, thus limiting Basic Law's protection of the 'inviolability of the home'.[675]

The Hiltrup report found that police identification documents on prostitutes were 'essential'. On the one hand, it deemed prostitutes 'particularly susceptible' to engaging in 'accompanying criminality' including theft and fraud. On the other hand, engaging in prostitution brought with it numerous dangers for prostitutes 'as can be seen from the not inconsiderable number of prostitute homicides'. Its authors argued that, as prostitutes often did not carry ID papers, the standard police identification of prostitutes would enable them to solve crimes, in particular murders, more easily.[676] For the working group, the continued record-keeping on women who sold sex was justified because of their supposed clear link—as both perpetrators and victims—to crime.

The assessment that women who sold sex were often victims of crime, including violent crimes, is reflected in numerous criminal cases, press reports, and recollections that go far beyond the assessments of the Hiltrup working group. The Hamburg chronicles, for instance, tell of numerous instances of severe violence perpetrated

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[673] Klaus Neidhardt, 'Polizei-Führungsakademie' in *Wörterbuch zur Inneren Sicherheit* ed. Hans-Jürgen Lange (Wiesbaden, 2006), 225-229.
[674] 'Maßnahmen zur wirksamen Bekämpfung der Zuhälterei', 06.11.1973, 136-1-4614, StHH.
[675] Ibid.
[676] Ibid.

against women who sold sex by pimps and clients. Volume three includes a photograph of Tina L.'s injuries, after she was beaten and scolded with a hot iron by her pimp in April 1967.[677] It was a client who tied up Erika W., beat her and tortured her with electric shocks in January 1973, after she refused his wish for 'abnormal sexual activities'. [678] For some of the women featured in the chronicle, their experience of violence ended in death. On 30 June 1978 38-year-old Renate R. was strangled in Hamburg's Herbertstraße, the perpetrator remained unknown. 15 days later Ruth B., 37, was murdered by a client, ostensibly for laughing at him during intercourse. On 1 November a soldier strangled Vera M. to death in Hamburg's *Eros-Center*.[679]

The cases referenced above are not all the descriptions of violence faced by women who sold sex in the chronicles. They are thus just a snapshot of the violence faced by women who sold sex in Hamburg, or in the Federal Republic as a whole. It is difficult to assess the scale of violence and crime that they faced, or whether there were fluctuations in the frequency or typicality of such cases. Although more extreme cases, such as murder, were presumably more likely to reach police records, many instances which left a less visible outcome did not. Crime records or statistics cannot speak to the smaller but more frequent violence presumably encountered by many women. The discovery of four bodies of women who sold sex in the Hamburg apartment of serial murder Fritz Honka in 1975, none of whom had been reported missing, indicates also the particular vulnerability of women who fell through the gaps of West Germany's welfare state.[680] The crimes enacted against women who sold sex and the perpetrators of such crimes took many forms. Whilst some fit the stereotypes of the abusive pimp and violent client, others cannot be subsumed under these categories so easily.

Violence could also come from other women, often driven by the competition they faced. In Angelika's case, one of her attackers was listed in the police's prostitute index. A case of extortion, threats, and physical violence from Berlin's Tiergartenstraße in the early 1970s clearly illustrates the threat of violence from other women. Here, two friends, Irmtraud L.* and Ingrid R.*, who had met selling sex on Berlin's Kurfürstenstraße began claiming privileges over their colleagues and used threats and violence to extract money for permission to sell sex on Tiergartenstraße. Elsbeth S.* who had started selling sex in 1971 'due to economic hardship' estimated she had paid

[677] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1963-1967, 331-1II-2680, StHH.
[678] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1972-1977, 331-1II-2682, StHH.
[679] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1978-1982, 331-1II-2683, StHH.
[680] 'Vier Leichen unter einem Dach', *Die Zeit*, 25.07.1975.

around 1,500 marks, whilst Karin F.* paid around 3,000 marks after they threatened to tell her husband her real profession. Further witnesses also documented physical violence. Inge W.*, who paid them 3,000 marks in total, claimed to have seen them beat and kick a young woman, whilst Brigitte O.*, who twice tried to move streets to avoid the pair, recalled the threat that Irmtraud would 'come back with three men and take her, [...], to Grunewald [forest]. She had apparently driven a girl to Grunewald once before and had her beaten up there'. Court reports detailed that all the witnesses continued to display great fear of the two women, and tried to present events in as harmless a light as possible.[681] The case indicates clearly their vulnerabilities to blackmail, extortion and physical violence.

In this case, the women of Tiergartenstraße banded together to oppose the extortion, utilising a period of absence by the perpetrators to build solidarity. In other instances, individuals were reliant on outside help to mitigate threats of violence. In a 1966 case of violence enacted by a client against multiple women in Cologne's Kleine Brinkgasse, for instance, police files record that, on hearing the commotion, three Italian men ran into the house to intervene. The protective role of these men, at a time of increased police presence in and around Kleine Brinkgasse, was hardly commented on by the police force who repeatedly maligned the presence of foreign workers in the city.[682] Such documented incidents of violence against women by their clients, or by others they came to contact with, rarely feature in the police files, an absence that indicates differing priorities of investigative work.

Neither the women of Tiergartenstraße, nor those of Kleine Brinkgasse, had turned to the police for help. Despite the prevalence of violence that women who sold sex faced from numerous sources, they could not rely on police support. The Berlin collage detailing the physical abuse endured by Angelika W. illustrates a disdain felt by some officers towards women who sold sex. When a street-working woman in West Berlin was threatened with a pistol, kidnapped and repeatedly assaulted by a man masquerading as a client, she found no support from police.[683] When Erika L.* turned to Hamburg's vice police 'to press charges against her pimp', she was herself served with an arrest warrant. Vice police offers recounted this as a humorous anecdote.[684] Recollections by women who sold sex also suggest that this stigma reached into the

[681] 'Gründe', B-Rep-065-109, LAB.
[682] 'Ermittlungsbericht', 17.03.1966, BR-0051-564, LAV NRW.
[683] Biermann, *Wir sind Frauen!*, 158.
[684] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1963-1967, 331-1II-2680, StHH.

court system, causing some women to avoid using the courts as a place to seek justice.[685]

The 1973 Hiltrup statement on pimping illustrates the multiple roles inhabited by police officers, which inevitably coloured their interactions with women who sold sex. Police officers frequently monitored women who sold sex on the street or in 'prostitute residences' to ensure they underwent regular testing for venereal diseases and abided by public order regulations—and such interactions always held the possibility of arrest. The risk was increased for non-German women without a work permit, who could face deportation. The criminalisation of on-street work through local regulations from 1961 onwards led women to work in less visible areas or take less time to agree terms or assess clients, which could in turn heighten the threat of violence they faced. Yet vice police officers in the 'pimp squad' could, conversely, also be the port of call for women looking to report coercion or abuse. Police officers encountered women who sold sex both as victims and as perpetrators of crime. The police's double role served to place women in additional danger.

For many women who sold sex, the double role of the police led them to turn to other ways of working or sources of protection from potential harm. This could mean choosing to work with other women in an illegal brothel, or turning to third parties. After a woman was beaten and raped in Hamburg's St. Pauli district by two brothers in July 1981, women who sold sex in the area recruited the help of men later referred to by police as pimps (*Luden*). When, a week later, the perpetrators tried to repeat their crimes, they were beaten by these men. At this point, Hamburg's police intervened.[686] Here, going to third parties for support protected the women selling sex on Hamburg's streets. When women did so, however, they simultaneously opened the possibility of prosecution of a separate set of crimes under the purview of the vice police; for profiting off the prostitution of others.

Profiting off the prostitution of others

A central focus of vice police forces across West Germany was the policing of crimes that enabled prostitution. The crimes of *Kuppelei* (procuring) and *Zuhälterei* (pimping) remained on the statute books, prohibiting third parties from profiting inordinately from

[685] Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 222.
[686] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1978-1982, 331-1II-2683, StHH.

the prostitution of others.[687] In their application and prosecution, if not in the letter of the law, these were largely gendered crimes; *Zuhälterei* was applied exclusively to men, whilst *Kuppelei* tended to be applied to women.[688]

Kuppelei had been an offence in Germany since the nineteenth century and required those prosecuted to have in some way abetted *Unzucht*, an unspecified sexual immorality.[689] In this it differed significantly from similar legislation in England, which specified profiting off prostitution.[690] The application of the *Kuppelei* paragraph (§180 of the criminal code) often lay at the behest of individual judges, and continued to be implemented towards a range of activities, often far away from the sale of sexual services. It was used against managers of illegal brothels, but also against a wide cohort of individuals deemed to be allowing immoral sexual activity, such as landlords of clandestine prostitutes, hotel owners who allowed unmarried couples to share a room or parents who allowed their teenage sons or daughters to engage in pre-marital sex. This broad terminology remained in force in the FRG until 1973, when *Kuppelei* was replaced with the narrower crime of 'promoting prostitution' (*Förderung der Prostitution*).

Vice police forces used the *Kuppelei* paragraph and later the crime of 'promoting prostitution' to close illegal brothels. The threat of a conviction loomed over the madams of the 'prostitute residences' in Hamburg and Cologne. In Cologne's Kleine Brinkgasse the housekeepers or madams signed a document acknowledging that 'as soon as it is determined that they [the tenants] live outside of the house or have moved into a dormitory, I will be charged with suspicion of *Kuppelei*'.[691] This insistence that women live as well as work in the houses, was to differentiate the Kleine Brinkgasse houses from brothels, marking them as 'residences' instead. Although the risk of a *Kuppelei* charge remained, convictions were rare, as local authorities and police often encouraged women to work here, to retain oversight. When, in 1965, a lawyer set in motion multiple investigations into the houses of Hamburg's Herbertstraße, in defence of a separate client accused of *Kuppelei*, four vice police

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[687] *Kuppelei* had been on the statute books since 1871, with some modifications: König, *Der Staat als Zuhälter*, 36; Steinbacher, *Wie der Sex*, 123.

[688] Victoria Harris, *Selling Sex in the Reich: Prostitutes in German Society, 1914-1945* (Oxford, 2010), 89–96; idem., 'Beasts in Human Clothing? Pimps, Moral Panics and the German Underworld', in *Rewriting German History: New Perspectives on Modern Germany*, ed. Jan Rüger and Nikolaus Wachsmann (Basingstoke, 2015), 169.

[689] Steinbacher, *Wie der Sex*, 123.

[690] Laite, *Common Prostitutes*, 9.

[691] 'Erklärung', 28.05.1963, BR-0051-564, LAV NRW. Madams in Hamburg signed similar agreements: 'Anlage 2, Senatssitzung 787', November 1951, 136-1-4614, StHH.

officers were delegated to work solely on this.[692] By the end of 1969, ten of the twenty cases—charged with *Kuppelei* and serving alcohol without a licence—had been tried and the landlords sentenced to fines for the latter. The charges of *Kuppelei* were found to be insubstantial.[693]

The statistical record has numerous significant gaps, which make general assessments of the scale of *Kuppelei* and *Zuhälterei* convictions difficult.[694] For instance, although some national conviction statistics on 'morality crimes' including *Kuppelei* and *Zuhälterei* are available, figures from West Berlin were not included in national crime statistics at all until 1962. This absence is particularly pertinent for this study but also, as Edward Dickinson has argued, significant for comparisons with earlier periods; as Berlin historically had higher rates of convictions, its omission from the statistics could artificially depress the figures for this period. After 1963, the record is once again marked by absences, for the West German statistical service ceased publishing conviction statistics on several 'morality crimes' at all, including *Kuppelei.*[695]

Nevertheless, Dickinson has used national crime statistics to assess some general trends in the policing of sex in the Federal Republic. He has found that, although the criminality rate for *Kuppelei* was very high in the early 1950s, this collapsed after 1955. Dickinson writes, 'the rate for procuring fell by half already between the middle of the 1950s and 1963; there is no reason to think that the decline did not continue', particularly if one accounts for later reforms which tightened up procuring laws.[696] By contrast, he finds that, if one consults the national conviction statistics, pimping barely registered as a police priority in the 1950s.[697]

The city level also offers some sparse statistics on *Kuppelei* and *Zuhälterei.* Data kept by Hamburg's vice police varies.[698] From 1963 onwards, West Berlin's vice police

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[692] 'Kuppeleiverfahren gegen sämtliche Häuser der Herbertstr.', *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1963-1967, 331-1II-2680, StHH.

[693] 'Vermittlungen gegen Vermieter der Herbertstr.', *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1967-1972, 331-1II-2681, StHH.

[694] On statistical gaps of *Kuppelei* and *Zuhälterei* cases in Weimar and Nazi Berlin: Jens Dobler, 'Saubere Hauptstadt - Sittlichkeitsdelikte', in *Großstadtkriminalität*, ed. idem. (Berlin, 2013), 146–86.

[695] Dickinson, 'Policing Sex', 236.

[696] Ibid., 240–41.

[697] Ibid., 238.

[698] Whilst 131-1-II-668, StHH, records that the vice police worked 366 *Kuppelei* and *Zuhälterei* cases in total in 1953, and 407 the following year, the vice police chronicle (331-1II-2679, StHH) records 278 *Zuhälterei* cases and 346 *Kuppelei* cases in 1953. These discrepancies may reflect investigations versus convictions.

began recording pimping cases separately, these were typically between 50 and 100 cases yearly. However, they emphasised that, because of the difficulty in obtaining evidence, there was likely a high number of unreported cases.[699] In 1968, Cologne recorded 181 cases of pimping.[700] These sparse statistics do not allow for an assessment of trends in policing, nor do they record how many of the cases were initiated by police or other parties. However, the threat of a conviction and the range of police measures permitted to investigate and arrest individuals remained significant and undoubtedly shaped the parameters of sexual labour.

Investigating *Kuppelei*

The *Kuppelei* paragraph was part of a larger complex of crimes against morality which dated back to the German empire and which mostly survived until the reforms of the criminal code in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The scope of situations which were policed and convicted as *Kuppelei* was large and the charge enabled significant disruptions into the private lives of those under suspicion. Perhaps the low burden of proof, allowing police officers to use *Kuppelei* indiscriminately, contributed to its durability. Vice police officers had an important tool to investigate and prosecute situations where, primarily through the provision of rooms, individuals abetted sexual immorality or commercial sex. The circumstances they investigated were diverse; *Kuppelei* prosecutions in the Federal Republic included hotel owners who knowingly rented rooms to unmarried couples or parents convicted for allowing a daughter's boyfriend to stay overnight. However, even amongst those *Kuppelei* cases which dealt more clearly with commercial sex, a large variation of situations could lead to a conviction. In some cases, the targeted exploitation of women who sold sex by a third party seems undeniable. In others, the circumstances appear far muddier. Often, the convicted party was a woman who had previously sold sex herself and now rented out rooms to other women in the sex industry.

Kuppelei cases could resemble the stereotypes of the typical brothel owner, mired in the world of underground crime. The case of Hans Helmcke, one of West Berlin's most famous brothel owners during the period, is illustrative here. Known as 'King of Berlin' he owned numerous brothels in Germany before he was murdered in 1973 in St. Pauli.[701] Alongside multiple convictions, including for drug or gambling-

[699] 'Die Entwicklung der Kriminalität in West-Berlin 1958-1967', 10.10.1968, PHS.
[700] 'Männer leben von der Liebe', *K-StA*, 01.10.1969, 13.
[701] Ruth Hermann, 'Kurzes Leben', *Die Zeit,* 20.09.1974.

related offences, for illicit trading, blackmail, violent offences and 'suspicion of maintaining treasonous contacts', Helmcke was repeatedly charged and convicted of *Kuppelei.* A short glance at his criminal records shows charges from June 1962, October 1964, February 1969, August 1970, December 1970 and February 1973, although it is unlikely that these represent all cases brought against him.

Helmcke's *Kuppelei* convictions were linked to his various establishments from which women sold sex. The most famous of these, the *Pension Clausewitz* was a brothel opened in the early 1960s and subject to numerous police inquiries, including the accusation that the East German Stasi used the brothel for espionage purposes.[702] A 1963 investigation into *Kuppelei* found at least eleven women working there who stated that they sold sex with the express permission of the owner. In 1971, West Berlin's vice police described two of Helmcke's establishments with 'brothel-like character' as 'meeting places for criminals and members of the underworld respectively' and as 'the starting points for a variety of crimes, ranging from simple assault, theft, robbery, extortion, and group racketeering to armed conflicts between rival pimp groups'.[703] The many criminal investigations into Helmcke suggest a culture of violence, including the physical abuse of and serious threats towards women who worked in his bars and brothels.[704] Here, *Kuppelei* charges were used alongside a range of other criminal charges to tackle a notorious brothel owner and underworld figure.

Even when *Kuppelei* cases indicated exploitation by third parties, however, they could differ significantly, as indicated in the following *Kuppelei* case from Cologne against an exploitative landlord. In April 1964, Walter H.* was charged with *Kuppelei* and demanding exorbitant rents (*Mietwucher*) for his house in Cologne's Heinsbergstraße.[705] The house had been severely damaged during the war and slowly rebuilt in the years 1957 to 1960. At the time of the investigation, it had no central heating, no bath or showers, but most rooms were furnished and included a sink.[706] Walter H. rented the rooms in this house exclusively to women who sold sex, profiting off the difficulties they faced finding landlords willing to rent to them. Former tenants told of rent prices ranging from around 60 to 250 marks weekly and even Walter H. himself admitted to authorities he charged between 50 to 70 marks weekly for a room. City assessors determined the price for similar accommodation in Cologne in 1964 at an

[702] Ibid.
[703] 'Originalschreiben an Kripo Eutin', 14.09.1971, 4, *Sammlung Clausewitz,* PHS.
[704] 'Schlußbericht', 13.09.1965, *Sammlung Clausewitz,* PHS.
[705] Gerichte-Rep-287-886, LAV NRW, 2.
[706] Ibid., 37.

average of 100 marks monthly for single rooms, and between 130 to 150 marks for furnished double rooms.[707] The investigation that accompanied this charge illustrated that Walter H. knowingly charged women who sold sex high rents. In 1962, a welfare worker had previously expressed concerns that Walter H.'s other house in neighbouring Rodenkirchen was being renovated to a brothel, and that he rented rooms to prostitutes.[708]

The case developed due to a statement given by a tenant, Elke E.*, when she was caught selling sex in Cologne. She detailed the situation in the Heinsbergstraße house:

> Herr H. knows that it is impossible for a normal person, who goes about their regular work, to pay this price. His high rents are based on the fact that in his whole house he rents only to girls, some of whom work in the Gasse [Kleine Brinkgasse], but most solicit on the street.[709]

Elke told the officers that thirteen unmarried women lived in the house, all with a man 'most likely their pimp'. When they had trouble paying the rent, Walter H. reportedly told them to 'not be so lazy'. [710] In a separate statement to police, former tenant Dagmar K.* claimed that she paid the high rent 'only because I was glad I had a room. It will have been the same for the other girls'.[711] She described multiple instances which made clear that Walter H. knew how the women earned their money and stated 'he knew precisely, that we were happy to have a room, that's why he did with us what he pleased and demanded extra money where he could'.[712] Unlike the *Pension Clausewitz*, the house was not a brothel, rather Walter H. exploited the vulnerability of women who sold sex to charge them high rents, while encouraging them to make more money.

Walter H. and his wife, with no previous convictions between them, were each sentenced to a three month suspended prison sentence, charged with demanding exorbitant rents.[713] Although multiple current and previous tenants of the house cooperated with the authorities, there appear to have been few positive consequences for the women involved. In February 1968 the Heinsbergstraße house again appeared in city documents, now from Cologne's public order office (*Amt für öffentliche Ordnung*). The house's new owner signed a document stating that Cologne's city administration would not permit him to rent rooms 'as was the case in the past, to prostitutes and their

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[707] Ibid., 37.
[708] 'Vormundschaftssache MM', Acc-441-A519, HAStK.
[709] Gerichte-Rep-287-886, LAV NRW, 3.
[710] Ibid., 3.
[711] Ibid., 14.
[712] Ibid., 14.
[713] Ibid., 160.

associates'. Instead, he would 'rent the house […] only to respectable persons'. Any contravention of this order would result in the closure of these rooms.[714] Police checks on the property suggest that the owner did not renege on his promises to Cologne's city administration.[715] Intervention by Cologne authorities thus served to make women who sold sex homeless and put them at further risk of exploitation by third parties. The *Kuppelei* charge, ostensibly to prevent exploitation of women who sold sex, did little to ameliorate their living situation but rather encouraged 'cycles of indebtedness'.[716] Furthermore, with West German courts allowing landlords of prostitutes to demand an 'inconvenience surcharge', women who sold sex were typically charged higher than average rents.[717] Although commercial sex was governed by a range of legal restrictions and regulations, these typically did not aim to protect the rights of women who sold sex. *Kuppelei*, although ostensibly designed to protect victims from sexual abuse, could, in its implementation, create further dependencies and vulnerabilities to exploitation.

A further *Kuppelei* case illustrates how women with personal experience of the sex industry often also faced direct prosecution. In West Berlin in 1959, Erna S., aged 71 years, was sentenced to three months imprisonment on a *Kuppelei* charge.[718] Erna had previously sold sex herself and as such had two prior convictions, including a one month prison term, which influenced the severity of her sentencing. She had provided full board and lodging to two women who, it appears, stayed in the rooms intermittently and brought clients to the flat. She told the court that she had made between 400 and 500 marks monthly, her income fluctuating along with that of those she rented to.[719] Although little information remains about Erna's circumstances, court documents reveal she had sold sex in the years 1907 to 1938. Her fate during the subsequent years of Nazi rule remains unsure, but it must be emphasised that this period encompassed the harshest measures taken by the regime against women who sold sex. It is unlikely that Erna S. had amassed savings or a pension to provide for herself in her later years. However, her history of contact with the criminal justice system, typical for women who sold sex, had left her more vulnerable to longer sentencing for *Kuppelei* offences.

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[714] *Amt für öffentliche Ordnung* memo, 05.02.1968, X-Best-6219-A18, HAStK.
[715] *Polizeipräsident* to *Oberstadtdirektor*: 'Absteige im Hause Heinsbergstrasse', 19.07.1968, X-Best-6219-A18, HAStK.
[716] Roper, 'Discipline and Respectability', 7.
[717] Kreuzer, *Prostitution*, 111.
[718] 'Strafsache', 22.04.1959, B-Rep-065-306, LAB.
[719] 'Gründe', 22.04.1959, B-Rep-065-306, LAB.

Kuppelei cases, precisely through their variation, provide us with a valuable insight into commercial sex in West Germany in the period under consideration. They illustrate a wide range of relationships and dependencies amongst actors in the sex industry, but also highlight the consequences of criminal law ostensibly designed to protect prostitutes from exploitation. Rather, the wide variety of applications and scope of action for police officers restricted how women could sell sex legally and thus pushed them both into illegality and vulnerability. The fear of a *Kuppelei* charge stopped landlords and hoteliers from providing rooms to supposed prostitutes, regardless of whether they would go on to sell sex from there or not. Even though a charge of *Kuppelei* did not target women who sold sex directly it thus significantly restricted their scope for movement and pushed them into the hands of third parties willing to risk the charge.

Reforming *Kuppelei*

In November 1963, Kuppelei was replaced in the statute books by the narrower crime of 'promoting prostitution', as part of a series of criminal law reforms which targeted crimes against morality. They echoed the focus on and politicisation of questions of sexuality, as driven by members of West Germany's New Left.[720] Importantly, they also reflected a shift in government at the federal level. After years of being led by centre-right Christian Democratic governments, in 1966 Social Democrats joined the government in a Grand Coalition, and took over fully in 1969. With this new power, the SPD 'systematically worked to undo also the legal underpinnings of the post-war culture of sexual conservatism', undertaking a reform of the laws on adultery, divorce, male homosexuality, pornography and abortion.[721]

Within this context, the *Kuppelei* crime's wide scope, and particularly its implications for private individuals, was reconsidered. In the late 1960s, the practice of charging the parents of sexually-active teenagers and adults with *Kuppelei* was questioned in the national media, with the law, courtrooms and judges pictured as outdated and out-of-touch with the realities of life in West Germany. As news magazine *Der Spiegel* reported in 1968:

> According to the prevailing legal opinion, every extramarital sexual intercourse is still considered "debauchery" [*Unzucht*]. And whoever "promotes" this alleged debauchery even simply by sleeping is punished in an uncompromising manner.[722]

[720] Herzog, *Sex after Fascism*, 152.
[721] Ibid., 142.
[722] 'Kuppelei. Viel Unruhe', *Der Spiegel*, 15.04.1968, 64.

Der Spiegel informed its readers of multiple cases in which extra-marital sex had been punished in local courts, including a mother of forty-four years sentenced to a prison sentence of six months after her underage daughter, with whom the mother had shared a room, had snuck out into an adjoining room to join her boyfriend on the couch—'Reason for the conviction: The woman should have stayed awake'.[723] Such stories were featured to illustrate a disconnect between West German courts policing sexual morality through old criminal laws and a population that increasingly accepted pre-marital sexual activity from its youth.

A further article in the same issue explicitly called for a reform of the paragraph on *Kuppelei*. The author, Dr Woesner of the Higher Regional Court (*Oberlandesgerichtsrat*), placed the continued existence of *Kuppelei* and its unclear focus on immorality in direct juxtaposition with the practices of West Germans in the late 1960s. For Woesner, *Kuppelei* was a symptom of a more general problem in the existing legal code: the 'misinterpretation of social changes and the results of modern sexual research, moralising paternalism and intolerance'. He identified a double moral standard. Whilst judges continued to regulate the private sphere of intimacy of individuals, they allowed 'organised large-scale prostitution enterprises' (a clear reference to the new Eros-Centers). Woesner concluded:

> In the time of the car and the call-girl, the legal distinctions are outdated anyway. […] It seems as if the ban on brothels serves only moral exculpation, to which no one attaches any importance, experts call it hypocrisy.[724]

Not only did the *Kuppelei* laws no longer reflect commercial sex of the late 1960s, they continued to reach into the private lives of West Germans. Echoing Laite's exploration of the production of 'ordinary citizens' and 'common prostitutes' as distinct legal categories, the discussions surrounding the reform of the *Kuppelei* charge conceptualised 'ordinary' West Germans their private sexuality as separate to women who sold sex.[725]

The passage of the fourth revision to the German criminal code (*Viertes Gesetz zur Reform des Strafrechts*, 4. StrRG) in 1973 saw references to *Unzucht*, which had until then been used to refer to commercial sex in West German law, replaced with the phrase 'pursuing prostitution' (*der Prostitution nachgehen*). *Kuppelei*, which allowed for the prosecution of those deemed to encourage extra-marital sex more generally, was

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[723] Ibid.
[724] 'OHNE EHE ALLES UNZUCHT', *Der Spiegel*, 14.04.1968, 67-69.
[725] Laite, *Common Prostitutes*.

replaced with the crime *Förderung der Prostitution* or 'promoting prostitution'.[726] This change in terminology and the replacement of criminal paragraphs distanced criminal law from the private bedroom, but likely had little effect for its impact in the policing of women who sold sex. The greater acceptance of visible sexuality in West German law and on its city streets did not extend to those involved in the sex industry, excluded by liberalisations in the field of private sexuality.

The pimp

Alongside *Kuppelei* or procuring, vice police forces also policed the related crime of pimping (*Zuhälterei*), in which women who sold sex were again identified as victims of crime. Until the reform of the criminal code in 1973, this crime was exclusively male.[727] The pimp or *Zuhälter* was understood as a central figure of a criminal underworld, living off the earnings of women who sold sex. Most women who sold sex were presumed to have a pimp, who may have provided them with certain protective services, but who surely profited from the association. By the mid-1970s, contemporaries assessed that the pimp, still very much a figure of concern, was largely no longer expected to provide any services at all.[728]

There prevailed many stereotypes around pimps, who throughout history have been both vilified and romanticised.[729] These stereotypes have proven powerful and continue to leak into historical research.[730] In West Germany, pimps were seen as criminal and 'work-shy', choosing instead to profit off 'their' prostitutes. In this, understandings echoed wider narratives prevalent in Europe and the USA in the early twentieth-century of the pimp as too lazy or unwilling to work for themselves.[731] In Germany, the historic links between pimping and *Ringvereine*, ex-convict associations which purported to have a licit reason for their community, such as sporting, singing or saving money, but had instead typically engaged in the drug trade, protection rackets

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[726] Sabine Gleß, *Die Reglementierung von Prostitution in Deutschland* (Berlin, 1999), 107; BGBl (4. StrG), 1973, 1728. A further crime of 'encouraging underage sexual acts' accompanied it.

[727] From 1973 the crime of pimping in law was designated gender-neutral.

[728] Kahmann/Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution*, 100.

[729] Julia Laite, 'Traffickers and Pimps in the Era of White Slavery', *P&P*, 237/1 (2017), 237–69.

[730] After asking 'who were these men who bartered women's bodies', Wingfield finds 'Pimps kept company with both clandestine and independent, registered prostitutes, whom they exploited'. Although she cites examples of prostitutes claiming a 'personal relationship' with men accused of pimping, she does not explore this possibility or its significance if true. Wingfield, *World of Prostitution*, 144.

[731] Laite, 'Traffickers and Pimps'.

and pimping, strengthened the image of a criminal underworld.[732] However, a range of pimp stereotypes competed in West Germany, determined by assumptions regarding race and class. The racialisation of pimp figures—as has been documented in the image of the Jewish 'white slaver' or the Black American pimp—in West Germany expressed anxieties about 'guest workers' and immigration in general.[733]

Much contemporary media coverage focused on central figures of the criminal underground, individuals whose reputations continue to this day. The Cologne *milieu*, for instance, has achieved renown under the affectionate term 'Miljö', resonant of the Cologne dialect. Due in part to their outlandish sartorial choices and supposed devil-may-care attitude, many of Cologne's pimps have remained a subject of media interest achieving cult status. Cologne's reputation as the 'Chicago on the Rhine' and the lifestyle of famous pimps continues to sell books and fill screens, curious of the wars of the underworld between 'Schäfers Nas' and 'Dümmse Tünn'. There are similar figures known as pimps and underworld figures from Hamburg and West Berlin, the media obsession with whom skews our historical understanding of pimping in West Germany.[734]

For the historian, pimping proves particularly elusive. Contemporary estimations of the numbers of men who worked as pimps remain as uncertain as the statistics regarding the number of women selling sex. Vice police officer Zühlsdorf police estimated in 1968 that there were around 1,500 pimps in Hamburg. His reasonings, however, seem flawed. Zühlsdorf calculated that if there were around 2,000 prostitutes—a number derived from the approximately 1,300 prostitutes registered at the health office plus an assumed 500 'clandestine' prostitutes—around three-quarters of these women would have a pimp.[735] Whether any of these figures can be given credence is unclear. It seems unlikely, however, that none of the 1,500 presumed pimps in Hamburg could be assumed to manage more than one prostitute.

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[732] Harris, 'Beasts in Human Clothing?', 162; Christian Goeschel, 'The Criminal Underworld in Weimar and Nazi Berlin', *History Workshop Journal*, 75/1 (2013), 58–80.

[733] See: Paul Knepper, 'British Jews and the Racialisation of Crime in the Age of Empire', *British Journal of Criminology*, 47/1 (2007), 61–79; Laite, 'Traffickers and Pimps', 237–69; Annegret Staiger, '"Hoes Can Be Hoed out, Players Can Be Played out, but Pimp Is for Life"—The Pimp Phenomenon as Strategy of Identity Formation', *Symbolic Interaction*, 28/3 (2005), 407–28; Roos, *Weimar through the Lens,* 206. On anti-Semitism and brothel-keeping in the 'Riehl trial', see: Wingfield, *World of Prostitution*, 17–46.

[734] See: Peter Müller and Michael Mueller, *Chicago am Rhein: Geschichten aus dem kölschen Milieu* (Köln, 2011); Barth, Reeperbahn.

[735] 'Presseberichte über Zuhälterunwesen', 29.04.1968, 136-1-4614, StHH.

The elasticity of the term, and the range of relationships that could be subsumed within it, further complicates the undertaking. The notoriety of famous pimp figures in the period has both impacted our current understandings of pimps in West Germany and determined the sources which remain. Although only few West Berlin pimping criminal files have been preserved in the state, city or police archives, files on Hans Helmcke, Klaus Speer and Manfred Brumme, whose criminal careers played out in the tabloids, have survived. With access primarily to sources on 'famous pimps', it becomes difficult to trace the accuracy of general assertions by members of the vice police, assertions which were, unsurprisingly, imbued with their own beliefs and stereotypes of the pimp. In the words of Luise White, 'it is not that there is a fine line between a prostitute supporting a devoted, unemployed lover and a man violently taking the plurality of a woman's earnings, but the levels of data available to historians blur such distinctions'.[736]

A wide range of circumstances and relationships were covered by the term pimp or *Zuhälter*. The range of third-party roles in the industry—of managers, waiters, taxi drivers and club owners—in danger of being accused of pimping through their proximity to commercial sex, exemplifies that the pimp could not be seen simply as someone who financed himself fully through the sexual labour of others. The breadth of the crime's applicability, and its reach to anyone (male) who benefitted financially from prostitution, also drew in the romantic partners and dependents of women who sold sex. A pimp may have intimidated and exploited prostitutes, he may have offered them useful services, or he may simply have been a pimp by association.

A brief note on terminology: I have chosen pimp as the most accurate translation of the German term *Zuhälter*. Yet both pimp and *Zuhälter* continue to be fraught terms today, imbued with various associations of race and class. Outside the realm of notorious pimp figures, where the deliberate use of the term is reminiscent of current usage of the 'pimp' or 'mack', the term was used as either description by others both colloquially and as a criminal charge.[737] I acknowledge the dominance of the outsider perspective, which subsumed a plurality of circumstances under one term, in the following examination.

[736] White, *Comforts of Home*, 5.
[737] Staiger, 'Hoes Can Be Hoed out', 407–28.

The criminal underground

The Nazi regime had peddled the myth that the *Ringvereine*, allowed to flourish in 'criminal' Weimar Berlin, had been resolutely dealt with by harsher policing. In the post-war years, however, West Berlin police again saw the need to take up the policing of *Ringvereine* as a central task, suggesting a certain level of continuity through the Nazi period.[738] In 1955 they implemented a special *Ringvereine* commando to investigate 'whether and to what extent "*Ringvereine*" or their members provide "protection" to prostitutes through pimping'.[739]

Police files document the existence of a range of underground associations in the FRG's early years. Reports posited that criminals joined these underground associations to find acceptance amongst individuals in similar circumstances. Members met regularly at specific bars and were required to invest money and intense loyalty to the association. In joining a *Ringverein*, they committed themselves to supporting fellow members who had fallen on hard times, both monetarily but also on occasion by admitting to crimes carried out by others. Membership in a *Ringverein* thus provided a community to ex-convicts. The West Berliner group known as the 'Augsburger Straße pimps' were active primarily in the period between 1951 and 1956. The group—responsible for the attack on Angelika W.—had a reputation for violence towards prostitutes, clients, and bystanders.[740] Similar reports are made of the associated 'Sparverein West', whose members managed bars and hotels that were popular sites of prostitution.[741] Although references to individuals associated with the *Ringverein* scene engaging in pimping continued during the 1960s, the associations themselves appear to have largely disbanded by this point.

While the *Ringvereine* ceased to dominate understandings of the criminal underworld, police officers and the West German media continued to fixate on the *milieu* of pimps and prostitutes. Much discussion and policing of pimps in the 1960s and 1970s centred on the building of rival groups or gangs. The Hamburg vice police chronicles tell of different pimp groups, of warring factions, for instance, between Düsseldorf and Hamburg. However, whilst there surely existed a level of rivalry, a more complex picture of pimp relations emerges on closer examination. Reports tell of rival

[738] Christian Goeschel argues that *Ringvereine* likely continued to exist throughout the Nazi period: Goeschel, 'The Criminal Underworld', 58–80.
[739] 'Sonderkommission "Ringvereine"', 16.03.1955, *Unterweltvereine,* PHS.
[740] 'Zuhälterbande aus der Augsburger Straße', *Unterweltvereine,* PHS.
[741] 'Sonderkommission "Ringvereine"', 16.03.1955, *Unterweltvereine,* PHS.

‘pimp’ football teams, from Cologne, Frankfurt, Hamburg and West Berlin.[742] Hamburg’s vice police officers referred to the St. Pauli team as ‘FC Bandito’ **[see A.3.]**.[743]

Although the references to football teams suggest a certain harmlessness, from the mid-1960s onwards, police identified increased gang-building in Hamburg’s St. Pauli. Karl-Heinz Westphal of Hamburg’s vice division on pimping, procurement and trafficking assessed that the influx and influence of organised groups of foreign pimps led to ‘native’ Hamburg pimps forming their own groupings in response.[744] The vice police first identified this trend when Viennese pimp groups attempted to corner the market—both of commercial sex and the illegal trade of stimulant drug Preludin—in Hamburg in the mid-1960s, the resulting fights well-documented in the Hamburg and Viennese media.[745] The chronicles, for instance, describe how the Viennese pimps were more used to working in groups, and came armed with knives, guns and ‘unusual criminal energy’.[746]

This episode in St. Pauli history ostensibly ended with the declaration of an ‘honour code’ in the district, the pact that disagreements be decided through violence, but without weapons.[747] In the following years, Hamburg’s St. Pauli became marked by fears of rising violence between rival crime gangs.[748] In 1977, Kahmann and Lanzerath assessed that pimping was gradually becoming a form of organised crime.[749] When the supposed ‘honour code’ fell in September of 1981, a spiral of violence between rivals followed, and sensationalised accounts of violent turf wars between pimp groups played out in the media.[750] Whilst similar tales of violent, rival pimp gangs are to be found in their abundance for both Cologne and West Berlin in the popular media—and notorious pimps travelled across the country—Hamburg’s St. Pauli, with its longer history of disrepute, was most closely associated with this development.

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[742] Linus Geschke, ‘Dumm’se Tünn Schäfers Nas: Köln und das Rotlicht’, *Der Spiegel*, 10.08. 2012.
[743] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1967-1972, 331-1II-2681, StHH.
[744] Kahmann/Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution*, 101.
[745] Barth, Reeperbahn, 109.
[746] ‘Weaner Maderln und Buabn in Hamburg’, *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1963-1967, 331-1II-2680, StHH.
[747] Barth, Reeperbahn, 110.
[748] Sneeringer, ‘Assembly Line of Joys’, 95.
[749] Kahmann/Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution*, 101.
[750] Barth, Reeperbahn, 131; Künkel, *Sex, Drugs & Control*, 196.

Foreign pimps

On 8 June 1964, Cologne's new EXPRESS paper ran the headline 'Pimps are becoming a plague on the city'. It informed its readers that behind most prostitutes there was a 'money-hungry pimp'. Often, they argued, he was foreign: 'men of German nationality are almost supplanted by foreigners, especially Orientals'.[751] Such concerns were also evident in statements by local politicians. In November 1963, SPD city council member Dr Braubach wrote to the Office for Law and Security about the supposed 'pimp problem' around Cologne's Eigelstein area. He stated:

> The prostitutes let their former German pimp go and take on a foreigner. Turks are especially popular. Allegedly, they even tend to honour their foreign protector more than their compatriot ex-lovers. It is now obvious that foreigners who are well subsidized in this way renounce work.[752]

Although the pimps of the football teams and 'warring gangs' were primarily white and German—here labelled as ex-lovers—the fear of foreign pimps taking over the market resurfaced throughout the period.[753]

Foreign pimps, rather than their German counterparts, were often referred to through racialised language and tropes. This is evident, for instance, in the Hamburg vice police chronicle. They detailed the tale of Silke, who had been a domestic worker before encountering the 'fiery' Hungarian pimp.[754] Italians were similarly described as acting 'with Mediterranean fire' when bringing young girls to sell sex.[755] Hamburg vice police officers repeatedly emphasised the pimp's inherent laziness and criminality, applying racialised stereotypes. In so doing, they drew on depictions of pimping deployed largely from the early twentieth century onwards, which saw the character of the pimp through a racialised and caricatured lens.[756] They also tapped into contemporary stereotypes typically expressed about 'guest workers' as foreigners with 'Southern temperament' and used established essentialist assumptions regarding presumed cultural and biological differences between foreigners and Germans to interpret pimping.[757]

Concerns about foreign pimps can be identified across West Germany. In part, such references were related to anxieties about increased migration and beliefs in

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751 'Die Zuhälter werden zur Stadtplage', *EXPRESS*, 08.06.1964.
752 Braubach to Rabenalt, 04.11.1963, Acc 361-A190, HAStK.
753 On foreign pimps as scapegoats: Stefan Slater, 'Pimps, Police and Filles de Joie: Foreign Prostitution in Interwar London', *The London Journal*, 32/1 (2007), 66.
754 *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1972-1977, 331-1II-2682, StHH.
755 *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1967-1972, 331-1II-2681, StHH.
756 Laite, 'Traffickers and Pimps', 238; Caslin and Laite, *Wolfenden's Women*, 152.
757 Woesthoff, 'Ambiguities of Anti-Racism', 51.

‘foreign’ criminality in the Federal Republic more generally. A 1966 study of West German media coverage of the ‘guest workers’, for instance, found that the press contained almost three times as many negative as positive judgements regarding foreign workers, with a third of all newspaper reports dealing with sensationalised stories around crime or sex.[758] A March 1964 article from Cologne indicates how discrepancies between crime statistics and press coverage could play out, even if we do not take into account how biases in policing might lead to an unrepresentative number of non-German men in the crime statistics. Under the sub-heading ‘Supplies from Abroad’, the *Kölner-Stadt-Anzeiger* reported that a growing number of foreigners were present in the crime statistics, especially Turkish men. However, although the heading linked crime to immigration, the article later admitted ‘nevertheless, the participation of foreigners in criminal activity has remained far behind that of the rest of the population’ and, importantly, only eleven percent of those convicted of pimping crimes were not German.[759] This shows that, at least in Cologne of the early 1960s, pimping convictions were overwhelmingly of German men. Statistics from elsewhere confirm this tendency; in West Berlin in 1967, of 86 pimp cases, only 5 (5.8%) were not German citizens. [760]

In 1968, Hamburg police suggested that an increase in foreign prostitutes resulted, as a consequence, in an increase of foreign pimps.[761] This finding was echoed in 1973 at the Hiltrup police academy, when discussants stated that past experiences showed this to be ‘inevitable’. An increase in foreign pimps, they argued, caused strong gang-building, amongst both foreign and German pimps ‘and therefore it comes to organized gang wars’.[762] A 1974 letter from the Federal Minister of the Interior argued that:

> as a rule, it is not the foreign prostitutes who are the main problem for the maintenance of public safety and order, but the pimps who follow them and who invade the “territories” of the German pimps, provoke them to retaliate and form groups or gangs for protection.[763]

In March 1973, officers on patrol in Cologne noted that all the French women in the Eros-Center were paying money to French pimps. These pimps, they noted, used the ‘most brutal methods’ to deal with women who were not deemed to be working hard

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[758] Herbert and Hunn, ‘Guest Workers and Policy’, 203.
[759] Björn Held, ‘Knotenpunkt Für Verbecher’, *K-StA*, 11.03.1964.
[760] ‘Die Entwicklung der Kriminalität in West-Berlin 1958-1967’, 10.10.1968, 35, uncategorised, PHS.
[761] ‘Vermerk’, Sorg, 03.06.1971, 136-1-2612, StHH.
[762] ‘Maßnahmen zur wirksamen Bekämpfung der Zuhälterei’, 06.11.1973, 136-1-4614, StHH.
[763] *Bundesminister des Innern* to *Oberbundesanwalt (Bundesverwaltungsgericht)*, 30.13.1974, B-106-117610, BArch.

enough.[764] West Berlin vice officers later recalled; 'again and again foreign pimp gangs tried to conquer the market, sometimes it was the Viennese, later the Algerians, the Iranians or Italians who wanted to gain a foothold in Berlin.'[765] Drawing on xenophobic stereotypes, police officer and the media often depicted foreign pimps as more violent than their German counterparts.

Pimp relationships

Although I have focused on pimps and the criminal underworld, the crime of pimping was ultimately defined by relationships to women who sold sex. Numerous women across West Germany were in relationships recognised by the authorities as pimping, although, before the reforms of 1973, this simply required receiving earnings from the prostitution of others. One woman recalled having a pimp when she started selling sex on the street in West Berlin in the 1950s, saying

> we had a real three-way marriage. I had to give up everything. I also got a fur coat. But I hadn't paid for it yet, and when I moved out, I had to return it....[766]

Her recollection of a relationship where she 'had to give up everything' but was ultimately able to leave without serious reprisals, suggests variation even between relationships that more closely resembled pimp stereotypes.

Cases detailed in police sources certainly illustrate that violence from third-parties, or the threat of violence, was part of the reality of some women who sold sex in the period under consideration. Pimping convictions often rested on victim statements, which, although they do not indicate the scale of these relationships, allude to the existence of stereotypical pimping relationships of violence and coercion.[767] Of the 'most brutal methods' supposedly employed by the French pimps in March 1973, Cologne officers recorded women being sliced with razors or burnt with cigarette butts.[768] Photographs from Hamburg's vice police depict similar injuries sustained by women who sold sex.[769] Amongst several cases, the chronicles reference 20-year-old Christine*, who was strangled with a cable by her pimp in Hamburg's *Eros-Center* in

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[764] 'Hinweis aus den "ECK" auf eine französische Gruppe', 27.03.1973, BR-0051-56, LAV NRW.
[765] Klös/Klös, 'Von der "Sitte"', 92–93.
[766] Biermann, *Wir sind Frauen!*, 27.
[767] See Dobler on Berlin's vice police in the early twentieth century: Dobler, 'Saubere Hauptstadt', 160.
[768] 'Hinweis aus den "ECK" auf eine französische Gruppe', 27.03.1973, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.
[769] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1978-1982, 331-1II-2683, StHH.

early April 1968.[770] In December of 1973, Luise*'s pimp sliced her face and arms with a razor for not earning enough.[771]

The Hamburg vice police chronicles offer numerous insights into how pimping was policed. The depictions, for instance, indicate how officers viewed the sex industry. Importantly, the chroniclers repeatedly stated how pimps forced 'respectable' women to sell sex. In one typical entry describing the pimp-prostitute relationship, the Hamburg officers wrote of Uwe D.*, who had, in October 1961, brought the 'then still respectable Gisela P[*...] to the Herbertstraße prostitute area and had not worked a day since'. They detailed multiple beatings, for not paying him 200 marks daily, for taking a coffee break, or ultimately, for trying to flee, and concluded that he was 'probably the largest and meanest in "Hamburg pimp history"'.[772] Such entries depicted the pimp as cause of the sex industry, whilst ignoring economic or societal factors that might lead women to sell sex. They failed to account for the numerous women who turned to selling sex, or continued to do so, without a pimp or protector. Nevertheless, understanding the pimp as the reason women began selling sex did not negate portrayals of women who sold sex as 'mentally impaired' or as criminal themselves.

The preoccupation with pimp violence by police forces or contemporary media can distract from the violence faced by women who sold sex from other sources, be it from clients, from other women, or the institutional or police violence that shaped many women's working and private lives. Simultaneously, the focus on this violence also obscures the complexities of many private relationships with men deemed pimps, with varying levels of violence or coercion. Perhaps most significantly, searching for pimp violence can cloud similarities of these relationships with many contemporaneous societally accepted heterosexual relationships, where domestic violence featured as a common reality.

The case of 20-year-old Elke O.* illustrates these complexities. After growing up in the care system, Elke turned to selling sex. Following a period of brothel work, she moved to West Berlin in 1961. She was in a relationship with a man seven years her senior who, it seems, had followed or moved with her and was later charged with pimping. Ernst W.* was a waiter and the court reports described him as a 'handsome, articulate young man of good manners'. In Berlin he was put on trial, accused of profiting from the prostitution of two women, including Elke, alleging that he had often

[770] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1967-1972, 331-1II-2681, StHH.
[771] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1972-1977, 331-1II-2682, StHH.
[772] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1963-1967, 331-1II-2680, StHH.

hit her when she did not earn enough. Ernst admitted to receiving some support from Elke after the move to Berlin when he was unemployed. The figures had remained low: he claimed that she had given him twenty to thirty marks a week to supplement his savings and gambling winnings. Ernst also admitted to slapping Elke in the face after he had returned after an absence and she had been insolent towards him. Elke told the court that they were engaged, that he had not wanted her to be involved in prostitution and that she had not let herself be persuaded to stop. Their relationship continued during Ernst's time in prison.[773]

This can be read as classic case of pimp exploitation, in which a young woman with a vulnerable past was forced or encouraged to sell sex through violence and manipulation. At the same time, however, it opens the possibilities to move past the stereotypes and to find room for personal romantic relationships, relationships which need not have necessarily precluded financial dependence or domestic abuse. In 1980, Pieke Biermann highlighted the similarities between supposed pimp violence and domestic abuse in her publication *"Wir sind Frauen wie andere auch!"* (We are women like others too), in which she interspersed the conversations between women who sold sex with quotes by interviewees initially featured in a publication on domestic violence.[774]

Although relationships with men deemed pimps could involve violence, violence alone need not distinguish these relationships from other heterosexual relationships. It remains difficult retrospectively to assess the prevalence of domestic violence in West German society, in part because there was no crime or legal provision that dealt with it directly. Rather it was largely a taboo subject, understood as a private matter between husband and wife. Women who wished to have their abusive husbands charged could use general assault provisions in the criminal code, but only if they were able to convince police officers to take their case seriously.[775]

Despite the absence of reliable statistics, the emergent women's movement tackled prevalence of domestic violence as a central issue. From 1976, West German feminist activists began founding women's shelters to both provide a space for victims of domestic abuse and raise public awareness of domestic violence. West Berlin's first

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[773] B-Rep-065-02-20, LAB.

[774] The publication is: Sarah Haffner, *Gewalt in der Ehe und was Frauen dagegen tun* (Berlin, 1976).

[775] Jane Freeland, 'Gendering Value Change: Domestic Violence and Feminism in 1970s West Berlin', *German History*, 2020, 5.

shelter was established in November 1976, with Hamburg's following in 1977.[776] An evaluation report of the West Berlin shelter found numerous structural barriers restricting women's ability to leave violent relationships, both legal and financial.[777] Feminist activists in Hamburg assessed that wider society wanted to, inaccurately, see domestic violence as a 'fringe phenomenon' confined to 'marginalised social groups'.[778]

Whilst most West German women who were the victims of physical abuse by their partners had little recourse to the law, women who sold sex could accuse their partners of pimping charges.[779] Indeed, most convictions of pimping rested on statements by female partners, although their motivations surely varied. In November 1968, four women who sold sex turned to the police in Hamburg-Altona to report a man for pimping who reportedly treated 'his prostitute […] unusually brutally'.[780] Vice police officers often lamented, however, that women were unwilling to make statements even when abuse was evident.

Crucially, the policing of pimping was also the policing of male partners of women who sold sex. In the categorisation of pimps, evidence of violence and exploitation took second place to ideas of gender roles and relations. An article that featured in the tabloid *BILD* in June 1966, and which caused a stir behind the scenes amongst the employees of Hamburg's VD clinic (ZB), illustrates the precarious situation faced by male partners of women who sold sex. Under the headline 'My wife is going to be a streetwalker!' it explored the fate of young couple Irene and Hans. After Irene decided to sell sex on the street, the couple went to the health office so that she could register officially. The welfare worker they met did not, however, tell them that Irene's work would put Hans at risk of criminal charges. A few days after the appointment, she instead reported Hans to the authorities and he was charged with *schwere Kuppelei* and pimping *Zuhälterei*.[781] Although he was charged with the mildest

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[776] Ibid., 13.
[777] Ibid., 5.
[778] Andrea Lassalle, 'Die autonomen Frauenhäuser in Hamburg 1977 bis heute', *Digitales Deutsches Frauenarchiv*, 2019 <https://www.digitales-deutsches-frauenarchiv.de/themen/die-autonomen-frauenhaeuser-hamburg-1977-bis-heute> [accessed 18.04.2022].
[779] See Joshi on German women denouncing their abusive partners to the Gestapo: Vandana Joshi, 'The "Private" Became "Public": Wives as Denouncers in the Third Reich', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 37/3 (2002), 419–35. See Laite on 'living off immoral earnings' legislation: Laite, 'Traffickers and Pimps', 265.
[780] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1967-1972, 331-1II-2681, StHH.
[781] 'Meine Frau soll Straßen-Mädchen werden!', *BILD*, 02.06.1966.

possible outcome, a three-month suspended sentence, the case indicates clearly the risks involved for male partners.

Police officers from each of the three cities repeatedly complained about the difficulty prosecuting pimps without a corroborating witness statement. West Berlin 'officers later recalled 'pimps are rarely talkative with the police, and even prostitutes are at best prepared to testify in the first anger after an argument'.[782] They typically interpreted women refusing to give statements, or later taking them back, as evidence of threats carried out by the pimp. In many cases, this likely did reflect relationships of violence and coercion. In others, the dynamics are less clear. When Anna B.* in Cologne refused to provide a statement about her partner, she stated that she would not, 'because I consider myself engaged and would like to exercise the right to refuse to testify'.[783] It remains difficult to retrospectively assess such statements of loyalty.

Changing ideas of the pimp: the female pimp

Until the reform of the criminal code in 1973, the crime of *Zuhälterei* was gendered. The law referred to 'a male person', thus excluding women entirely from its jurisdiction. Women, if deemed to be encouraging prostitution through their actions, were charged under the *Kuppelei* paragraph.

Nevertheless, references in police files to female pimps or *Zuhälter*, although rare, did occur. Typically, these depicted a supposed lesbian relationship, in which one or both of the partners sold sex. Police files from West Berlin in 1955 tell of case of a 21 year-old woman whose female partner, dressed as a man, stood nearby and acted 'like a pimp'. Both were brought to the health office on suspicion of VD. There is no evidence that the partner was charged with pimping or similar.[784] The authors of the Hamburg vice police chronicle also mention a case of a female pimp in 1968, using the term to refer to one party of a same-sex couple, although the authors specified that both women sold sex. Police refused to investigate even though one of the women independently turned to the police to report her partner. The officers informed her that pimping was a crime limited to male perpetrators.[785] Criminal law and policing combined to decide what behaviour counted as violence or exploitation and who could

[782] Klös/Klös, 'Von der Sitte', 92-93.
[783] Gerichte-Rep-287-886, LAV NRW, 9.
[784] 'Aufklärungserfolge der Kriminalpolizei', 10.03.1955, PHS.
[785] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1967-1972, 331-1II-2681, StHH.

be seen as a victim. When women were depicted as pimps, this was often listed alongside other ways they did not conform to gendered expectations.

In June 1973, *Der Spiegel* featured the above case alongside claims by vice police officer Westphal that, according to police estimates, almost 500 of Hamburg's 2,200 pimps were female. Westphal stated that Hamburg's female pimps were becoming more visible, because of a growing tolerance of same-sex relationships. Rather than using cars or motorboats as status symbols, female pimps supposedly used clothing and jewellery. As well as conforming to female gender displays, however, the article reported 'they cultivate their image through male "bragging", "heavy drinking" for example, or "loud shouting to the police"'. Life with a female pimp, Westphal judged, was equally exhausting as with their male counterparts, referencing both physical violence and faked affections.[786] Westphal's assertions continued to see pimping in a gendered manner, discounting less ostentatious exploitative relationships.

The willingness to label women in the role of pimps appears to have been exclusively reserved for women in same-sex relationships who could be seen as taking on the 'male' role. This indicates the strength of stereotypes of gender and sexuality in the assessment of pimping, a crime that continued to be coded male. At the same time, however, police acknowledged that female pimps had typically sold sex previously or continued to do so. They were thus able to traverse the boundary between assumed victim and supposed perpetrator. Shortly after the article's publication, the 1973 criminal code reforms of the pimping paragraph went into force, removing the specification of the sex of the perpetrator and defining the crime more precisely. It specified that the perpetrator 'exploits' (*ausbeutet*) the prostitute, rather than simply accepting money from them, yet did not define what counted as exploitation. For the first time, the criminal paragraph also specifically criminalised measures designed to stop prostitutes from exiting the profession.[787] Overwhelmingly, however, pimping continued to be policed and understood as a male crime with female victims.[788]

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[786] 'Kesse Väter', *Der Spiegel*, 10.06.1973.
[787] Kahmann/Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution*, 41–43.
[788] Out of 55 pimping cases known to the police in West Berlin in 1974, only one pimp was female. The following year, two out of thirty cases were female: Statistisches Landesamt, *Statistisches Jahrbuch 1975* (Berlin, 1975), 153; Statistisches Landesamt, *Statistisches Jahrbuch 1976* (Berlin, 1976), 151.

Changing ideas of the pimp: the manager

That same year, in November 1973, the attendees of the Hiltrup police academy seminar discussed the changing 'type' of pimp. They argued that, in contrast to the typical 'brutal thug', 'clever "businessmen"' types were emerging. These 'businessmen' pimps, they found, presented themselves as worldly men, both to prostitutes and to the authorities. They supposedly knew how to make use of all their rights in a trial, whilst simultaneously doing all within their power to make prostitute women take back any incriminating statements.[789] Head of Cologne's vice police, Toni Breuer, had, in 1969, similarly told the local press that there were class distinctions between pimps. He stated that pimps with women who did not earn so much tended to commit other crimes to top up their income. Higher class or 'businessmen' pimps, of the sort discussed in Hiltrup four years later, tended to have the finances and resources to escape the police.[790] Some 'pimps' certainly did have access to more finances and resources. Patrol reports from Cologne, for instance, note how 'Schäfers Nas' escaped police measures by having six separate apartments and 'for this reason, nothing is ever found during searches'.[791] However, it is unlikely that this was typical for the majority of West German men arrested on pimping charges.

Contemporary studies of pimping and prostitution support the idea of the changing type of pimp. A 1976 study argued that pimps typically no longer offered protective services to prostitutes whilst, in 1977, Kahmann and Lanzerath found that the unstable 'prostitute companion' who lived off the earnings of only one woman, no longer surfaced as a common subject of investigations.[792] Such findings reflect wider changes in the West German sex industry, particularly the move to Eros-Centers, where a *Wirtschafter* or manager could keep an overview of earnings, perhaps administering the income himself and handing over earnings to a pimp directly.[793] Police found such practices in the Hamburg and Cologne Eros-Centers, and in some smaller establishments.[794] Although some studies distinguished between pimps and *Wirtschafter*, these roles were not as clearly differentiated as assumed.

The focus on the *milieu* or the criminal underground has presented the pimp as an undoubted criminal figure. Yet, as activists and social workers explored in West

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[789] 'Maßnahmen zur wirksamen Bekämpfung der Zuhälterei', 06.11.1973, 136-1-4614, StHH.
[790] 'Männer leben von der Liebe', 13.
[791] 'Vermerk, Fahndung-E', 23.08.1972, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.
[792] Kahmann/Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution*, 69, 100.
[793] Ibid, 92–93.
[794] See: Gerichte-Rep-355-190, LAV NRW.

Berlin and elsewhere in the 1980s, the scope of the criminal paragraph on pimping or *Zuhälterei* went far further. An edition of Hydra's magazine, the *Nachtexpress*, published in 1983, argued that the 'supposed protection' that the pimping paragraph offered women who sold sex could be used against their interests, as it explicitly made no difference whether the 'victim' consented, 'even if there are women who voluntarily live with a man, support him and take on the role of breadwinner'.[795]

Policing the drug trade

In the early 1960s, the stimulant Preludin—available as a prescription drug and marketed as a diet pill in the FRG—was sold in the toilets of many of St. Pauli's entertainment venues. Targeted often at the young guests of Hamburg's Beat clubs, the trade was organised by members of the red-light district: pimps, porters and barkeepers were involved in distribution.[796] Preludin's popularity in St. Pauli, and indeed the involvement of pimps and prostitute women, only appears to have reached the radar of the police around the mid-1960s, when *Der Spiegel* covered its popularity in the national press.[797] From this point onwards, historian Robert Stephens identifies an expanded focus on drug use and abuse by local and national police forces across the FRG. Yet he finds Hamburg police 'woefully unprepared' for the scale of Hamburg's new 'drug problem'.[798] Over the 1970s, heroin gradually took hold in the larger West German cities. Whilst a 1968 report about crime in West Berlin stated that drug use and related criminality was being observed closely but that the situation was 'not yet alarming', by 1977, a former police officer later claimed, West Berlin had become, the 'capital city of heroin'.[799]

The period saw a drastic shift in both the forms of drug use typical in West Germany, but also in how they were viewed by politicians and in the press. Stephens identifies 1969-1975 as 'time of crisis' in the understanding of West Germany's 'drug problem'. Established assumptions about the kinds of people who engaged in regular

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[795] 'die stellung der prostituierten im strafrecht', *Hydra Nachtexpress*, Spring 1983, 28.
[796] Barth, Reeperbahn, 101; Stephens, *Germans on Drugs*, 64.
[797] Sneeringer dates this point as 1967, but Preludin played a role in 'pimp wars' with Viennese pimps in 1964/1965: Sneeringer, *A Social History*, 129; 'Bomben auf St. Pauli', *Der Spiegel*, 13.02.1966. Preludin and its consumption and trade by prostitutes featured in: *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1963-1967, 331-1II-2680, StHH.
[798] Stephens, *Germans on Drugs*, 124; Sneeringer, *A Social History*, 115; Barth, Reeperbahn, 114.
[799] 'Die Entwicklung der Kriminalität in West-Berlin 1958-1967', 10.10.1968, 33, uncategorised, PHS; Rüdiger Engler, '25 Jahre Gemeinsame Ermittlungsgruppe Rauschgift (GER)' in *Berliner Kriminalpolizei*, 109.

drug use were challenged by the new surge in involvement of German youths as drug consumers. In response, the period saw the differentiation between supposedly 'soft' (i.e., hashish and LSD) and 'hard' (opiate) drug consumption. Whilst the former was begrudgingly tolerated, the latter became seen as a new form of deviance. Police responses increasingly focussed on the policing of 'hard' drug consumption and on drug smuggling.[800]

Focussing on the policing of drug smuggling, did not necessarily mean a shift from policing the *milieu*, however. In a 1977 report the Federal Criminal Police Office (*Bundeskriminalamt*) linked both drug smuggling and dealing to the *milieu* of prostitutes and pimps. In their report, they identified a frequent use of prostitutes as drug couriers with the following statement:

> Women from the prostitute milieu were conspicuously used as couriers here, taking advantage of anatomical characteristics for smuggling.[801]

The association of women who sold sex with the crime of drug smuggling served to further embed the association of commercial sex with a criminal underworld. Here, the focus was not on drug-users, but on the investigation of national and international criminal networks, with women who sold sex as central suspects.

Policing migration

During the 1960s and 1970s, concerns about commercial sex also became intertwined with concerns about migration: of foreign clients (often understood to come from the 'guest workers' employed across West Germany), foreign prostitutes, and foreign pimps. Whereas discussions of prostitution and migration had, in the 1950s, primarily featured German women and girls moving abroad, in the 1960s West German authorities began to focus on immigrants selling sex in the Federal Republic. Over the course of the 1970s, their presence became understood as a danger to public order.[802] It appears that over the 1960s and 1970s a growing number of women who sold sex were not German nationals and, although still a minority, increasingly non-white. These women, who perhaps could not speak German, who might not know their legal rights, but particularly women without valid visas, were far more vulnerable to police interventions. Throughout West Germany, the criminalisation of certain forms of migration was used as a way of controlling commercial sex in the city.

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[800] Stephens, *Germans on Drugs*, 123.
[801] 'Bericht über den Stand des Rauschgifthandels in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland', 10.01.1977, 136-1-1765, StHH.
[802] Dolinsek, 'Gehandelte Frau?', 67.

Federal states implemented separate visa policies for migrant women who sold sex. Whilst the city-state of Hamburg did not give residence permits to foreign nationals who indicated they would sell sex on arrival in West Germany, North Rhine-Westphalia did allow for short term visas. The Rhineland-Palatinate gave residence permits only for women who worked in one Eros-Center.[803] This different approach can perhaps be explained by the specificities of Hamburg's sex industry, as well as the city more generally. The reputation of Hamburg's red-light district St. Pauli and the city's transport links made it popular with seafarers and tourists and thus also a popular destination for women looking to sell sex. By the 1970s, big business interests had established themselves in Hamburg's sex industry and surely stood to profit from an influx of foreign labour. Perhaps these prospects contributed to the decision by state authorities not to provide residence permits to any foreign nationals looking to sell sex.

The discrepancy between federal states on this matter proved a long-standing concern of Hamburg's Interior Ministry. In January 1968 Hamburg's representatives explained that police officers regularly found non-German prostitutes with residence permits issued by authorities in different federal states, even though the women had admitted their intention to sell sex. After receiving their legitimate permits, the women supposedly travelled to Hamburg, where the authorities were unable to deport them. Some, they argued, had married a German citizen to obtain citizenship:

> this eliminates any possibility of removing them from the federal territory. this is particularly undesirable because foreign prostitutes do not usually enter the country alone but are accompanied by pimps and other criminal elements who are difficult to catch. according to the current view, foreigners who obviously want to engage in prostitution should not be allowed to obtain a residence permit in any state of the federal republic of germany.[804]

In February 1968, at a meeting of representatives from the federal states and the Federal Interior Ministry, immigration law was discussed with reference to non-German prostitutes. Hamburg representatives again raised the issue, asking that residence permits granted by other states be at least spatially restricted and thus not valid in Hamburg.[805] Although representatives from Bremen and Bavaria supported this argument, North Rhine-Westphalia raised the concern that, if foreign prostitutes were deported or not given visas, the demand would be covered by German women, perhaps underage girls. Foreign prostitutes, they supposed, might then be a 'lesser evil'

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[803] 'Ausländerrechtliche Maßnahmen gegen ausländische Dirnen und Zuhälter', 10.06.1974, 136-1-2612, StHH.

[804] *Behörde für Inneres* to *Amt für innere Verwaltung, Oberregierungsrat,* 03.01.1968, B-106-117610, BArch. See similar reports in: Kreuzer, *Prostitution*, 132.

[805] *Ausländerreferentenbesprechung13.-15.02.1968 in Bonn*, B-106-117610, BArch.

(*kleineres Übel*).[806] The representative of the Federal Interior Ministry echoed NRW's concerns about underage German prostitutes taking over from foreign women, and suggested the possibility of a significant increase in rapes as a consequence. They argued that migrant women should be under stricter controls, be given spatially or temporarily restricted residence permits, or documents that recognised but did not condone their presence and that evidence of prostitution should figure as a reason for deportation.[807] The discussions illustrate both the pervasiveness of the belief that the demand for prostitution would remain regardless of measures taken, that foreign women would bring with them a criminal underground, but also, importantly, the view of foreign prostitutes as a potential buffer to protect German women and girls from rape or engaging in prostitution.

In any case, the 1968 meeting did not unify measures across the federal states; Hamburg's Ministry for the Interior was still requesting uniform procedures in all federal states in 1974.[808] Whilst the city-state of Hamburg continued to refuse women who sold sex a visa, in Cologne, women who worked in registered 'prostitute residences' were given residence permits.[809] The meeting does, however, indicate both the widespread understanding of foreign prostitutes as possibility to minimise harm faced by German women and the resulting vulnerable position held by women who sold sex in West Germany without German citizenship. When the debate was revisited in 1974, membership of the European Economic Community (EEC) complicated the discussion; in these cases, evidence of prostitution could no longer be easily used as reason for deportation.[810]

Although there is no thorough data on the proportion of non-German or non-white women selling sex in the three cities under examination, police reports indicate a growing minority. Over the course of the 1950s and 1960s, the women registered in the 'prostitute residences' of Hamburg and Cologne were overwhelmingly German citizens; when Kleine Brinkgasse was closed in 1972, all 109 registered residents were German, with twenty-nine of those born in Cologne.[811] Even in the late 1970s, the great majority of women registered in Hamburg's ZB were German nationals, a large proportion from

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[806] Ibid.
[807] Ibid.
[808] Hamburg *Behörde für Inneres* to *Innenministerium BaWü*, 18.06.1974, B-106-117610, BArch.
[809] *Innenminister NRW* to *Innenministerium BaWü*, 22.07.1974, B-106-117610, BArch, 14-16.
[810] Dolinsek, 'Gehandelte Frau?', 69.
[811] Klaus Zöller, 'Häuser werden versiegelt', *K-StA*, 15.12.1971.

Hamburg or surrounding towns.[812] Police reports on Cologne's *Eros-Center* tell a different story, however. Undercover officers reported on one of the opening nights in January 1972 that, whilst most women had been recruited locally 'the star of the troop might currently be a black Amazon from South America, who crept through the courtyard in a leopard costume'.[813] Going forward, officers kept a record of the nationalities of women employed at the *Eros-Center*. In the 1970s, there were typically around 70 women without German citizenship, out of a fluctuating total number of around 120-240 women who sold sex in the *Eros-Center*. In mid-October 1975, the police noted 71 foreign prostitutes in the centre: 45 from France, eight from Austria, six from Italy, five from Benelux states, two from Spain, and one each from Switzerland, Finland, England, Brazil, and Africa (the officers did not elaborate).[814] Similar records were kept throughout the 1970s and, at first glance, suggest the women of the *Eros-Center* came primarily from European countries. A report from February 1976, however, noted that, police records included women from Uruguay and Argentina under the category 'Italian', and under the category 'France' included women from Algeria, Martinique, Tunisia, Guadeloupe, and South Vietnam. This categorisation indicates that migration was a far more global phenomenon, shaped also by colonial links.[815] Unlike their German counterparts, foreign women selling sex in the Cologne *Eros-Center* were restricted to residence and work permits of maximum six months, after which they were required to leave. Cologne's vice police recorded 'excellent cooperation with the immigration office' in this regard'.[816]

The numbers of women selling sex on temporary residence permits do not tell us about undocumented women who sold sex away from police control. In 1975, Breuer of Cologne's vice police differentiated between separate categories of unauthorised migrant prostitutes. He identified that 10% were 'guest workers' who went on to sell sex, whilst another 10% had previously worked in the entertainment industry more generally.[817] Breuer then distinguished between the 30% of migrant prostitutes who had come to West Germany of their own initiative and 50% who had ostensibly been brought there by a pimp, often had fake papers, and worked in 'prostitute residences' or

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[812] Kahmann/Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution*, 65.
[813] *Fahndung A*: 'Eros-Center', 13.12.1971, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.
[814] 'Eros-Center Köln', 15.10.1975, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.
[815] 'Angaben über ausländische Prostituierte in der BRD', 17.02.1976, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.
[816] 'Sitte' to *Gemeentepolitie* Rotterdam, 06.12.1974, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.
[817] Papadogiannis explores how Greek trans women migrated to West Germany to work in a factory, before turning to sexual labour: Papadogiannis, 'Greek Trans Women', 348.

salons.[818] Breuer's assertions testify to a diversity of experiences and circumstances for migrant women who sold sex and illustrate they often moved between different jobs. Nevertheless, his categories also serve to obscure some of the nuances undoubtedly present. Particularly the final category—women brought to Germany by a pimp—conceals the 'infinite array of relationships' possible as part of this constellation.[819]

Police departments used women's migration status to control prostitution in the city, deporting non-German women found selling sex.[820] Hamburg was particularly severe in this regard.[821] In 1968 Hamburg's police force requested that employees at the health office's prostitute VD clinic (ZB) break staff-patient confidentiality and tell immigration services of non-citizen women registered at the health office for selling sex. In this case, the health office declined to cooperate, arguing that it would deter women from registering and complying with regular VD checks.[822]

Throughout the 1970s, non-German women who sold sex in West Germany occupied a double role. Although viewed by some as a 'necessary evil', authorities implemented restrictions on how and where they could work and, ultimately, upheld the possibility of deportation. Thus, whilst migrant women who sold sex were permitted to work in various Eros-Centers across the Federal Republic, their work outside of these buildings was subject to significant policing and legal actions. Migration status became an increasingly important way to police commercial sex in the city.[823]

'Trafficking'

The 1970s also saw 'trafficking' return as a political concern in West Germany when, as part of the reforms of the criminal code in 1973, and in accordance with international agreements, lawmakers added a paragraph on *Menschenhandel* (human trafficking).[824]

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[818] Quoted in: Kreuzer, *Prostitution*, 132.

[819] Laura Agustín, *Sex at the Margins. Migration, Labour Markets and the Rescue Industry* (London/New York, 2007), 33.

[820] The forcible repatriation of women found to be selling sex has been and continues to be common practice in many countries across the globe: Hetherington and Laite, 'Trafficking, a Useless Category?', 14. On the reconfiguration of deportation as a protective rather than punitive act, see: Payne, 'Deportation as Rescue', 40–66.

[821] 'Ausländerrechtliche Behandlung ausländischer Prostituierter und Zuhälter', 14.07.1967, 136-1-2612, StHH.

[822] 'Ausländische Prostituierte', 02.01.1968, 136-1-2612, StHH.

[823] Dolinsek, 'Gehandelte Frau?', 70.

[824] The reference to *Menschenhandel* ('human trafficking') rather than the traditional *Mädchenhandel* ('traffic in girls') is a significant change. On the decline of

This criminalised those who recruit or abduct another to a foreign country against their will to make them perform sexual acts there. The crime covered both trafficking into and out of the Federal Republic.[825]

In December of that same year, the magazine *Neue Revue* published an article entitled 'A Thai girl costs 3,000 marks', which detailed the supposed large-scale trafficking of Thai women by German pimps, to work in massage parlours in cities across West Germany.[826] The article reached the Thai ambassador, who sent a copy to the foreign office in February 1974, sparking inquiries into the details of the article and their veracity.

Yet investigations indicated that the reports had either been grossly exaggerated or completely fabricated. Whilst representatives of the Hamburg judicial authority reported investigative proceedings in place against a Swedish citizen suspected of tricking Thai women into coming to St.Pauli and working as strippers (an investigation that was later paused), replies from Dortmund, Düsseldorf and Bremen found the claims in the article incorrect or doubtful.[827] The Cologne prosecutor general reported only some criminal proceedings against the owner of a massage parlour who had advertised 'Thailand massages', but had, it turned out, not actually employed any Thai women.[828] Cologne's police later detailed an investigation into a group of Austrian pimps who were, supposedly, bringing Thai women to bars and nightclubs in Cologne. They found evidence of around 25 women, all from Bangkok, who had legitimate residence permits to work at establishments run by one company, although some had left Cologne to work illegally at massage parlours elsewhere.[829] Reports from West Berlin's Justice senator referenced two cases underway against German citizens suspected of the pimping and trafficking of one and two Thai women respectively.[830] An update in July 1975 mentioned a third case against a female brothel owner accused of recruiting a young dancer in Thailand and bringing her and other young women to work in her 'massage parlour' in Berlin.[831] Nothing found came close to the magnitude detailed in the initial article.

Mädchenhandel as a political priority in West Germany, see: Dolinsek, 'Kein Mädchenhandel mehr', 385–416.

[825] Kahmann/Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution*, 43.

[826] 'Ein Thai-Mädchen kostet 3000 Mark', *Neue Revue*, 10.12.1973, NW-0876-17019, LAV NRW.

[827] NW-0876-17019, LAV NRW, 16, 18, 40.

[828] Ibid., 26.

[829] Ibid., 27.

[830] Ibid., 36, 38.

[831] Ibid., 41.

Although the claims by *Neue Revue* in 1973 appear to have been grossly exaggerated, concerns about the trafficking of women increased throughout the decade, often alongside stories of sex tourism by West German men or of 'mail-order brides'. A 1978 article of the *Deutsche Zeitung* entitled 'Women who smile and submit: On the German love and marriage market the exotic faces are multiplying' illustrates the stereotypes at play in media explorations of the topic. The author told his readers that an estimated 100 to 200 Thai women were being flown into the FRG each month. He explained that German men's fascination with 'the rarely actually pretty Thai girls' could be at least partly explained 'with that devoted and composed kindness'. His deployment of stereotypes of the submissive Asian woman alongside joking asides about their accents was typical of contemporary media coverage.[832] Officers of Hamburg's vice police echoed the *Deutsche Zeitung* when recounting a 1976 case of a German couple who had Thai women work as 'models' at Hamburg's Stephansplatz. When they wrote with amusement of a woman unable to speak German, they attributed to her the phrase: 'I come to Germany for bumsing [*bumsen* is slang for sexual intercourse]'.[833]

By 1980, concerns about the trafficking of Thai women and sex tourism were far more pronounced. It was a regular topic in the media, covered by both reputable newspapers and glossy magazines, but also appears to have sparked organizing on the ground. In March 1980 Catholic and Protestant women's groups in the Rhineland-Palatinate joined together and wrote to the Federal Minister of the Interior detailing

> Girls lured away from their home country with false promises, with offers of jobs and placed—also in our Federal Republic—in the hands of pimps, in so-called "massage parlours" and similar establishments. Not being able to speak German, these girls and women become totally dependent, which leads to physical and psychological breakdown.[834]

In September, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* newspaper detailed a petition of 100,000 signatures condemning sex tourism.[835] That November, these concerns had once again reached the German foreign office, informed by the German embassy in Thailand of an article by Thai journalist Pairoj Poompradit in the daily *The Nation Review*, which estimated over 5,000 Thai women working in the West German sex

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[832] 'Frauen, die sich lächelnd fügen', *Deutsche Zeitung*, 29.09.1978; Ulrike Schaper, 'Reisen in eine vorfeministische Vergangenheit.: Bundesdeutscher Sextourismus und das Verhältnis zur "Dritten Welt"', *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht*, 2018, 170–84.

[833] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1972-1977, 331-1II-2682, StHH.

[834] *Katholische u. evangelische Frauengemeinschaften* Betzdorf-Kirchen/Sieg to *Bundesminister des Innern*, 20.03.1980, B-106-117610, BArch.

[835] 'Frauen Verurteilen "Sex-Tourismus"', *FAZ*, 13.09.1980.

industry.[836] Such assertions would come to dominate the following decade, with concerns around 'trafficking' coming to define understandings of the global sex industry—a development with serious consequences for the policing of commercial sex in Germany in the coming years.[837]

Conclusions

The widespread reforms of the West German criminal code undertaken in the late 1960s and early 1970s are often cited as an important element of the history of the Federal Republic, central especially to narratives of sexual liberalisation. In many ways, these reforms helped to transform West German society. The decriminalisation of sex between consenting adult males, for instance, enacted through the reform of §175 of the criminal code in 1969, has been described as a watershed moment for gay rights in West Germany.[838]

It is possible to both appreciate the impact of these wide-reaching reforms, whilst simultaneously identifying their limitations, here most relevantly their limitations for women who sold sex in West Germany of the 1970s. The reforms of the criminal code focussed largely on protecting the realm of private intimacy from the interference of criminal law, a privilege that was not extended to the realm of commercial sex. The replacement of the crime of *Kuppelei* with that of 'promoting prostitution' protected the parents of unmarried couples, but did little to ameliorate the lives of those selling sex or their access to basic resources such as affordable housing. With the reforms, the criminal code focussed instead more specifically on the sexual immorality of prostitution, rather than immorality in the population at large; women who sold sex continued to be enmeshed in the realm of law, legal restrictions on their labour inevitably linking prostitution to criminality. The expansion of the crime of pimping to allow for its gender-neutral application widened the scope of potential convictions, yet continued to also criminalise the romantic relationships of women deemed to be prostitutes.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, women who sold sex in West Germany typically had numerous encounters with police and the wider criminal justice system. At the same time, the police and the courts were able to decide what constituted violence

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[836] Dolinsek, 'Gehandelte Frau?', 71. See: B-106-117610, BArch.
[837] Outshoorn, 'The Political Debates', 141–55.
[838] Robert Moeller, 'Private Acts, Public Anxieties, and the Fight to Decriminalize Male Homosexuality in West Germany', *Feminist Studies*, 36/3 (2010), 528–52.

and exploitation and thus when prostitute women were eligible for support or the mantle of victimhood. Exploitation outside of the male pimp framework remained largely unrecognised. By consequence, overlapping interpretations of prostitutes as both victim and perpetrator made institutional help for women who sold sex largely out of reach and pushed them to find other sources of safety and protection.

The complicated and contradictory legal circumstances facing those involved in prostitution was summed up by West Berlin's prostitute self-help group Hydra in the winter of 1985. They informed readers of their magazine that:

> prostitution is not a criminal offence and therefore does not fall under the jurisdiction of the police. […]The task of the police is therefore to control the area around prostitution and to fight its criminal excesses. But even when this control is directed against the criminals, ultimately the prostitutes are directly affected by it.[839]

These assertions suggest that over a decade after the large-scale reforms of the criminal code, women who sold sex in West Germany continued to be both directly affected by criminal law and often treated as criminal themselves.

This reality has also affected our historical knowledge of women who sold sex. Their presence in the archive is so often determined by their encounters with law enforcement, whilst avoiding institutional interference has in turn frequently meant escaping the historical record. Even if we turn away from criminal law directly, women who sold sex on the streets and in public places in the 1960s and 1970s were increasingly subject to arrests and police intervention in the name of public order and are thus disproportionately represented in the archives. The developments in public order policing, and the involvement of actors from all realms of city life in controlling commercial sex in city space, is the concern of the following chapter.

[839] 'Den letzten beißen die Hunde', *Hydra Nachtexpress*, Winter 1985, 24.

5. Public Order

Ilse M., a 23-year-old working class woman from Munich, came to Cologne in the early summer of 1962. There was a warrant out for her arrest, so Ilse did not register with the city or take up formal employment on her arrival. Instead, she looked to informal avenues to earn money and soon turned to selling sex in Cologne's centre. It is unclear whether she was aware on her arrival that selling sex on Cologne's streets had recently become more contentious, with local administrators and police officers intensifying the treatment of commercial sex as an issue of public order in the city.

On 27 July Ilse was identified as a potential prostitute and stopped by officer Dünges of Cologne's police force. He informed her that the entirety of the city centre had been categorised as a restricted area (*Sperrbezirk*) the previous year, meaning that solicitation and prostitution were not allowed here. She was not arrested but rather handed a sheet, which included the details of the August 1961 regulation, a map of the restricted area and a warning: 'Violations of this regulation are punishable by imprisonment up to 6 weeks. […] In addition, **admission to a workhouse** may be required' [see Appendix Five].[840] Dünges then added her details to the police list of women caught soliciting in Cologne's *Sperrbezirk*.[841]

Cologne's 'Regulation on the Protection of Youth and Public Decency' of August 1961 was one of many *Sperrbezirk* regulations passed across West Germany after a June 1960 modification of the criminal code created a federal legal basis for state and local governments to ban commercial sex in certain areas.[842] Hamburg similarly declared part of its city centre—the old town and the St. Georg—a *Sperrbezirk* in its 'Regulation on the Prohibition of Prostitution (*Gewerbsunzucht*)', which came into effect on 1 September 1961.[843] Solicitation on the street now came with far greater risk of arrest and punishment, as the two cities increasingly treated women selling sex as a public order concern.

The 1953 GBG had framed commercial sex as a public health issue. This law aimed at the surveillance and regular mandatory examination of those 'strongly

[840] 'Merkblatt über die Strafbarkeit der gewerbsmäßigen Unzucht', BR-0051-563, LAV NRW.
[841] Case against I.M., 1962, *Amtsgericht Köln*, BR-0051-563, LAV NRW.
[842] BGBI 33, 04.07.1960, 477. See: Schießl, 'Von der Duldung', 113–40; Kraus, *Stadt ohne Geschichte?*, 412; Kreuzer, *Prostitution*, 145; Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 177.
[843] 'Verordnung über das Verbot der Gewerbsunzucht', 136-1-4610, StHH.

suspected' of having and spreading venereal disease. However, whilst the GBG had been conceived and debated in the throes and aftermath of a post-war venereal disease epidemic, by the time of its passage, the epidemic had been curbed and most common venereal diseases could be quickly and effectively cured.[844] Although venereal disease remained a concern, other interpretations of prostitution began to play a more important role in determining local policies, in the context of developing cities and a rapidly changing society. By the early 1960s much of the city space was undergoing or had undergone transformative rebuilding projects, whilst citizens were experiencing the effects of substantial economic growth. This would continue throughout the 1960s and cement the importance of the individual consumer in West Germany's avowedly capitalist society.[845] At the same time, the increasing commercialisation of sex was promoted as evidence of modernity, with sexualised advertisements visible in urban space.[846]

In the years that followed the passage of the GBG, discussions about commercial sex shifted their focus to the presence of women selling sex in public space, and the threat these supposedly posed for public order. Street prostitution in particular was placed under new restrictions and regulations over the period, which aimed at pushing women who sold sex from the streets. The focus on street prostitution was not new: Roos locates Catholic-dominated Cologne under the mayoralty of Konrad Adenauer as being 'at the forefront of efforts to reintroduce harsher penalties for street soliciting' after the 1927 prostitution law reforms.[847] The solutions that local administrations and police across West Germany resorted to, however, would come to define German sex work policy to this day.

Discussions on prostitution as a public order problem, and the resulting measures, largely occurred at the local level as politicians, public order offices (*Ordnungsämter*) and police departments pushed collaborative or contesting measures to remove women selling sex from the cityscape. Yet, although similar methods of managing commercial sex were introduced in various West German cities and towns, their implementation often differed across local contexts. Pressure both from ordinary residents, local investors and city authorities influenced the measures taken and not

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[844] Lindner, *Gesundheitspolitik*, 290.
[845] Sywottek, 'From Starvation to Excess?', 342; Mark Spicka, *Selling the Economic Miracle: Economic Reconstruction and Politics in West Germany, 1949-1957* (New York/Oxford, 2007), 1; Diefendorf, *In the Wake of War*.
[846] See; Steinbacher, *Wie der Sex*, 355.
[847] Roos, 'Backlash', 75.

taken, which in turn affected the lives of women who sold sex.

In the following, I first trace the implementation of *Sperrbezirke* in Cologne and Hamburg in the 1960s and 1970s. I include a wider focus on other residents of the city, their engagement with policing and its impact. I draw out the specificities of Hamburg's entertainment district and the tensions between its special status as tourist attraction and the maintenance of public order. West Berlin, as a city that never implemented a *Sperrbezirk*, features as an outlier and counterpoint. Subsequently, I delineate the complicated status of 'prostitute residences' regarding public order in the city. This includes the introduction of new *Eros-Centers*, the involvement of 'big business' in the local management of commercial sex, the intersections with the city administration and the courts, as well as the impact on women in the local sex trade.

Cologne's 'Regulation on the Protection of Youth and Public Decency'

The widespread implementation of *Sperrbezirke*, particularly from the early 1960s onwards, was certainly one of the most significant developments in the management of transactional sex in this period. Although there had been attempts over the course of the 1950s—Cologne for instance had experimented with a police ordinance to ban commercial sex from areas of the city in 1956—these early experiments had been short-lived, as they were declared invalid by the Federal Court of Justice in 1958.[848] The 1960 modification of the criminal code, however, ushered in a new phase in the management of prostitution across the Federal Republic and created the legal foundation for restricted areas for commercial sex.[849]

By the end of 1961, both Cologne and Hamburg had used this criminal code modification to declare their own restricted areas. Before the law had even passed, Cologne's city administration, with police help, worked on preparing their regulation and defining its boundaries. Although Cologne's police chief expressed his views that the new law was 'by no means a satisfactory solution' and 'not suited to making policing work easier', the police collaborated with the public order office and other

[848] 'Stellungnahme zu zwei Beschlüssen', 22.03.1968, 331-1II-760, StHH.

[849] On current *Sperrbezirke* see: Renate Ruhne, 'Boulevard und Sperrbezirk: urbane Ideale, Prostitution und der Kampf um den öffentlichen Raum der Stadt', *Sozialwissenschaften und Berufspraxis*, 29 (2006), 192–207; Martina Löw and Renate Ruhne, 'Domesticating Prostitution: Study of an Interactional Web of Space and Gender', *Space and Culture*, 12/2009 (2009), 232–49; Künkel, *Sex, Drugs & Control*.

administrative branches to develop ideas for the new *Sperrbezirk*.[850]

In deciding the provisions and phrasing of Cologne's *Sperrbezirk* regulation, city authorities and police department consulted their counterparts in Munich, Frankfurt, Düsseldorf and Stuttgart.[851] Cologne's police chief used the decisions taken in Düsseldorf and Stuttgart to offer advice to the city's chief municipal director. He argued that in Stuttgart, the *Sperrbezirk* regulation had been successful, with women leaving the city or selling sex from bars 'so that one hardly ever meets prostitutes in public anymore'.[852]

From August of 1961 onwards, Cologne's *Sperrbezirk* regulation prohibited prostitution and its related activities on streets, paths, squares and bridges of the new restricted area, including all public places. The restricted area covered around 1,720 hectares: the entire city centre. Within this space, the regulation forbade prostitution and solicitation *in public*. Thus, activities behind closed doors remained outside of the remit of this regulation if they stayed out of public view.[853]

When Ilse M., newly warned of the boundaries of the Cologne *Sperrbezirk*, encountered officer Dünges on the streets of Cologne again in late August 1962, she was arrested for contravening the *Sperrbezirk* regulation. Her case, however, illustrates the 'public' focus of the regulation and the grey area inhabited by bars and hotels. On 23 August, Ilse chose to search for a potential client in *Zur Täsch*, a Cologne bar known for being frequented by women selling sex. Rather than approach potential clients, Ilse waited for a punter to approach her and, once they had decided on the terms of their agreement, they left the bar together. On exiting the bar, Ilse was spotted by officer Dünges. She entered the client's car, and drove with him to the hotel *Rheinischer Hof*. When she left the hotel, Dünges was waiting for her.

By the end of August, Ilse's latest arrest had been overturned. The court declared that neither her actions in the bar or the hotel, despite both being in the restricted area, went against the regulation itself, which only listed the streets, paths, squares and bridges. Its stated aim— 'youth protection'—did not reach to seedy bars or hotels where the youth had no place. The court found that such places:

> may be or are public, but […] either through their outward appearance or well-known

[850] 'Bericht über die Besprechung am 14.10.1960', BR-0051-563, LAV NRW.
[851] See; Munich *Kriminalpolizei* to Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Cologne, 14.12.1960, BR-0051-563, LAV NRW.
[852] *Polizeipräsident* to *Oberstadtdirektor,* 10.05.1961, BR-0051-563, LAV NRW.
[853] 'Verordnung zum Schutze der Jugend', BR-0051-563, LAV NRW.

> closed-off nature serve the purposes of prostitution, for the great majority of those who tend to reside there, either pursue prostitution themselves or are looking for those sorts of people'.[854]

Ilse's arrest was rescinded, the judgement implying that solicitation away from the public eye was permitted within certain parameters.

Hamburg's 'Regulation on the Prohibition of Prostitution'

After Hamburg passed its own *Sperrbezirk* regulation in August 1961, those caught selling sex in the restricted area could receive a fine of up to 150 marks, or up to six weeks imprisonment. In some cases they could be admitted to a workhouse.[855] The preparations for the new regulation in Hamburg had been underway since the previous year, a response both to the impending law change but also to local complaints about commercial sex in Hamburg's St. Georg district. These complaints, which originated from citizen groups, hotelliers and local business owners, were taken up by the Hamburg-Mitte CDU.[856] Local authorities found existing legal restrictions on commercial sex to be lacking. Hamburg's police chief, for instance, noted that women who sold sex had adapted to the law's restrictions and developed strategies for working that were 'police-proof'.[857]

Unlike Cologne, Hamburg's regulation did not restrict its prohibition to actions in public but simply placed a blanket ban on commercial sex in the restricted area. Its *Sperrbezirk* was also less expansive; Hamburg administrators confined it to St. Georg in the east, as well as the city centre, and left out the entire St. Pauli district by the harbour—an area with historic associations with the sex industry **[see A.4.]**.[858]

The majority of complaints about commercial sex concentrated on St. Georg, which could explain why authorities chose to focus their interventions here. However, St. Georg's position as a central district with low rents and a large stock of unrenovated housing also offers important context. The complaints that spurred administrators into action came primarily from local business owners with hotels or offices in the district,

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[854] Case against I.M., 1962, *Amtsgericht Köln*, BR-0051-563, LAV NRW.

[855] 'Verordnung über das Verbot der Gewerbsunzucht', 136-1-4610, StHH.

[856] 'Antwort auf die Anfrage Drucksache Nr. 65/59', 09.11.1959; 'Senatskommission für die Bekämpfung der Gewerbsunzucht', 17.12.1962, both 136-1-4617, StHH.

[857] 'Senatskommission für die Bekämpfung der Gewerbsunzucht', 17.12.1962, 136-1-4617, StHH.

[858] 'Verordnung über das Verbot der Gewerbsunzucht', 131-II-1-688, StHH; Ortwin Pelc, 'Der sündige Stadtteil. Der Ruf St. Paulis und seine Entstehung', in *Hamburgs Geschichte. Mythos und Wirklichkeit*, ed. Gisela Jaacks (Hamburg, 2008), 90–105.

rather than the poorer residents who benefitted from the lower rents.[859] In his history of Hamburg, Gert Kähler views the prohibition of prostitution in the St. Georg quarter in direct relation to urban planning measures that looked to replace older cramped housing in this area—explicitly referred to by urban planners as 'slums'—and to do away with the supposed disorder and chaotic mix of homes and workplaces.[860] The removal of commercial sex from the area evidently formed part of a broader initiative to 'clean up' the district, illustrating the wider interplay between the management of commercial sex and city planning.

In contrast to St. Georg, authorities deemed the St. Pauli area to be functioning, despite recognised associations with commercial sex, in its 'most tolerable' form.[861] Whilst deciding boundaries for the restricted area police representatives stated that

> as the world-famous entertainment district of a port city, St. Pauli cannot be measured by normal standards. The influence of the entertainment venues on the general conditions in the area is so great and so well-established that the prostitution rooted there cannot be eliminated, but at best displaced.[862]

With these priorities in mind, the implementation of a *Sperrbezirk* in Hamburg in 1961 with aim to 'sanitise' the St. Georg district simultaneously served to establish St. Pauli as a de facto tolerance zone. This decision would have significant consequences for the forms and spaces of commercial sex in the city.

Sperrbezirke in their implementation

For both Hamburg and Cologne, the *Sperrbezirk* regulations marked a decisive change in the management of commercial sex at the city level. *Sperrbezirke* lowered the burden of proof for the police to successfully charge women ostensibly soliciting in the restricted area. To further increase the likelihood of a prosecution, authorities in Cologne decided that those working on the streets would be handed information sheets which depicted the boundaries of the *Sperrbezirk* and emphasised the consequences of any transgression.[863] In requiring each recipient to sign her acknowledgement of the *Sperrbezirk* and its boundaries, Cologne created a register of women encountered by police supposedly selling sex, including their names and addresses. Police officers

[859] See letters in 136-1-4617, StHH.
[860] Kähler, *Von der Speicherstadt*, 150.
[861] 'Begründung', 10.11.1960, 136-1-4610, StHH.
[862] Ibid.
[863] 'Merkblatt', BR-0051-563, LAV NRW.

looked for women walking slowly, searching for eye contact, approaching or entering cars.[864] By late December, around 600 of these information sheets had been handed out and personal information recorded **[see A.5.]**.[865]

When searching for prostitute women, police officers often encountered women who claimed to be wrongly accused of selling sex. Some challenged their registration by calling on a husband or a lawyer to vouch for their respectability or by providing evidence of a respectable job.[866] Such a challenge necessitated the contacts to, primarily male, figures and the belief that police registration could be disputed. Social background likely determined reactions to the receipt of these sheets and the registration they enabled.[867] In protest at being stopped repeatedly, one woman sarcastically requested 'written permission for being on the street without a man' as well as guidelines from police 'about the rights and behaviour of a citizen on the street [...], especially if you are a woman'.[868] Although it is not possible to identify whether, in these individual cases, women had been selling sex when they encountered police, it is likely that a number had indeed been wrongly accused simply by virtue of being women in public space. In this regard, *Sperrbezirke* rest within a longer history of the prostitute as 'public woman'.[869]

Officers and administrators from Hamburg and Cologne agreed that the primary target of these regulations were women who sold sex on the street, and its primary aim was 'cleaning up the cityscape'.[870] Although the wordings of the *Sperrbezirk* regulations in Hamburg and Cologne differed, their implementation was markedly similar. Both cities concentrated on policing street prostitution by increasing patrols and subsequent arrests.[871] In 1962, Cologne's *Kripo* carried out 772 police patrols targeted at prostitution. The women's and youth protection divisions performed a further 267

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[864] 'Äusserung', 7.10.1970, B-2003-110, LAV NRW.
[865] 'Verbot der Gewerbsunzucht', 27.12.1961, BR-0051-563, LAV NRW.
[866] 'Vermerk', 1212.1977; 'Beschwerdeschreiben an Polizeipräsident', 19.07.1973, both BR-2003-110, LAV NRW.
[867] On defences of female honour: Hearne, 'To Denounce or Defend?', 735.
[868] 'Beschwerdeschreiben an Polizeipräsident', 03.01.1973, BR-2003-110, LAV NRW.
[869] Ruth Mazo Karras, *Common Women: Prostitution and Sexuality in Medieval England*, Studies in the History of Sexuality, 1998, 138; Judith Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London* (Chicago, 1992), 46.
[870] 'Verbot der Gewerbsunzucht', 27.12.1961, BR-0051-563, LAV NRW. On the implementation of Cologne's *Sperrbezirk* in the 1960s see: Annalisa Martin, '"Cleaning up the Cityscape": Managing Commercial Sex and City Space in Cologne, 1956–1972', *ERH*, 29/2 (2022), 311–30.
[871] Breuer, 'Verbot der Gewerbsunzucht', 02.01.1964, BR-2003-110, LAV NRW.

controls and patrols.[872] Previously, they had made between 20 and 25 arrests on the basis of street solicitation per month. After the regulation came into force, these figures rose sharply; September 1961 saw previous arrest numbers double, in October they reached 88 arrests. Whilst figures fluctuated in the following months, they remained between double and quadruple the typical previous arrest numbers.[873] Although only 12.6% of arrests in 1963 resulted in a criminal conviction, by 1965 this had jumped to 46.2%. Hamburg's vice police, who had processed 42 solicitation charges in 1960, intensified their work with the passage of the *Sperrbezirk*, with 179 cases in 1961 and 462 cases in 1962.[874] 15 vice police officers were designated solely to police and patrol the restricted area, separate from those deployed in St. Pauli and elsewhere.[875]

Arrests for soliciting in the *Sperrbezirk* could result in fines, imprisonment or, until 1969, admission to a workhouse. Whilst Hamburg continued to implement fines to punish solicitation in the *Sperrbezirk*, the Cologne district court (*Amtsgericht*) abstained from using fines for *Sperrbezirk* offences after 1963.[876] By 1967, the average penalty in Cologne for a woman arrested for soliciting in the *Sperrbezirk* therefore lay at around five weeks' imprisonment, although sentences varied from a two-week suspended sentence to admission to a workhouse. Workhouse admissions for periods of up to four years, although often disregarded by historians, were rising gradually in Cologne, from 22 in 1961 to 89 in 1966.[877] The increase in patrols and arrests likely resulted in more frequent interactions with police officers, making women eligible for a harsher sentence as repeat offenders.

The new *Sperrbezirk* regulations changed both the policing of commercial sex, and the practice of selling sex itself, as women who sold sex adapted to new legal and policing frameworks. In the immediate aftermath, police in both cities noted that many chose to move off the streets. In 1963, Cologne's chief superintendent claimed that the new legal foundation had enabled them to largely push women who sold sex from view and increase the proportion of punishments handed out.[878] A 1967 report from Hamburg similarly stated that, whilst street and car-based commercial sex had not been fully

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[872] *Kriminaloberrat* to *Polizeipräsident,* 17.01.1963, BR-2003-110, LAV NRW.
[873] Breuer, 'Verbot der Gewerbsunzucht', 02.01.1964, BR-2003-110, LAV NRW.
[874] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1963-1967, 331-1II-2680, StHH. These figures do not include the arrests undertaken by other departments.
[875] *Niederschrift Sondersitzung Hauptausschuss,* 14.11.1960, 136-1-4617, StHH.
[876] Ibid.; Kiehne to *Polizeipräsident* Hamburg, October 1967, BR-0051-563, LAV NRW.
[877] Ibid.; Willing, 'Zwangsbewahrung', 477.
[878] Kiehne to *Regierungspräsident*, 15.02.1963, BR-0051-563, LAV NRW.

eliminated, its presence in St. Georg had been reduced to 'tolerable' levels.[879]

In practice, the more frequent patrols and arrests led some who worked on the streets to move entirely from street-based work, or simply to flee the streets in response to patrolling officers.[880] Many of those selling sex in Cologne or Hamburg chose to look for clients in local bars.[881] In the immediate aftermath of the regulation's passing, Cologne residents complained that women were now using the parks not covered by the regulation. More generally, women began selling sex just outside the *Sperrbezirk*, and were thus able to escape charges.[882] To combat these new hotspots of street prostitution, Cologne's *Sperrbezirk* was extended in 1963, stretching to neighbouring Rodenkirchen.[883]

The management of solicitation in bars varied depending on concerns about crime and public order. Whilst police surveillance of bars remained a feature of crime prevention strategies in Cologne, Hamburg and West Berlin, police did not necessarily classify women selling sex in a bar as a public order concern. Officers who inspected the bars in Cologne's Rheingasse throughout the 1960s remarked that solicitation here remained, to the outside eye, 'within the scope of 'bourgeois' way of making acquaintances'; women sold sex 'without disruptive appearances' and 'in a discreet manner'.[884] Bars offered a space for the sale of sex, which could remain discreet and thus out of sight of the broader public, simultaneously contained within a space already under police surveillance for crime prevention purposes.[885]

Despite the popularity of bars as an off-street location to meet potential clients, high arrest rates suggest that women continued to solicit on the streets of both *Sperrbezirke*, although this was less pronounced in Hamburg's St. Georg than in Cologne's city centre. In Cologne, the locations of street prostitution shifted, with new concentrations noted at the Hansaring or around the Severinsbrücke, as women moved around the city to escape the patrols. They moved strategically to avoid arrest and prosecution, hiding behind passing traffic and using excuses one officer described as

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[879] 'Prostitution in anderen Stadtteilen', 03.10.1967, 136-1-4617, StHH.
[880] 'Stellungnahme: Verbot der Gewerbsunzucht', 24.01.1963, BR-0051-563, LAV NRW.
[881] Breuer, 'Auswirkungen der Dirnensperrverordnungen', 02.01.1964, BR-0051-563, LAV NRW; 'Prostitution in anderen Stadtteilen', 03.10.1967, 136-1-4617, StHH; Alexander, *Prostitution in Deutschland*, 37.
[882] 'Bekämpfung des Dirnenunwesens südlich des Militärringes', 10.12.1962, BR-0051-563, LAV NRW.
[883] 'Amtsblatt für den Regierungsbezirk Köln', 22.03.1963, BR-0051-563, LAV NRW.
[884] 2.K. to *Oberstadtdirektor*, 24.07.1964; Report, 04.08.1964; Breuer to *Oberstadtdirektor*, 11.08.1964, all BR-0051-559, LAV NRW.
[885] 2.K. to *Oberstadtdirektor*, 24.07.1964, BR-0051-559, LAV NRW.

‘impossible to refute’.[886] Although he did not expand on what these excuses were, women most likely gave a range of other reasons for their presence in the area. Individual cases files from 1957—when Cologne had previously attempted to install a *Sperrbezirk*—detail how women told of plans to go to restaurants, the cinema, or that they were simply heading home for the night.[887] Much like their reactions to health office registration, women gave false names and addresses or refused to cooperate when handed an information sheet on the *Sperrbezirk*. Others avoided prosecution by moving residence without informing the authorities.[888]

The passage of *Sperrbezirk* regulations had decreased the burden of proof to arrest and charge women caught ostensibly soliciting in the area. However, these regulations could not go against Basic Law and ban women from entering the area at all.[889] Prosecutions often rested solely on the word of police officers or the admission of the women themselves. Some cases incorporated a statement from other arrested women or potential clients.[890] Whilst cases from Cologne document police officers noting down car number plates or interviewing clients, the latter were often not particularly cooperative.[891]

Avoiding police altogether was easiest in the face of uniformed patrols, yet the new intensity of repeated patrols also made it easier to recognise undercover officers and thus modify behaviour in their presence.[892] Women who sold sex in Cologne reportedly recognised both the undercover police officers and the number plates of unmarked police vehicles.[893] In Hamburg, they recognised patrolling officers with such frequency that the vice police started recruiting officers from other departments for plainclothes work.[894] Rather than considering simply the date that local *Sperrbezirk* regulations went into force, only by recreating how they were implemented—in particular the constant cat-and-mouse game between police and prostitute women—can we begin to assess their impact on commercial sex in the city.

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[886] ‘Zusammenfassender Bericht’, 01.06.1964, BR-0051-559, LAV NRW.
[887] See cases in: Acc-194-A57, HAStK.
[888] ‘Bericht über die Bekämpfung des Dirnenunwesens’, BR-2050-7, LAV NRW.
[889] This is different to many forms of earlier state-regulated prostitution, which saw registered women banned from major public squares, streets or parks: Roos, *Weimar through the Lens*, 20; Corbin, *Women for Hire*, 85.
[890] Kiehne ‘Verbot der Gewerbsunzucht’, 27.12.1961, BR-0051-563, LAV NRW.
[891] See cases from: Acc-194-A57, HAStK; BR-2003-110, LAV NRW.
[892] ‘Vermerk’, 18.06.1976, BR-2003-110; Breuer, ‘Auswirkungen der Dirnensperrverordnungen’, 02.01.1964, BR-0051-563, both LAV NRW.
[893] ‘Feriengrüße’, 17.
[894] *Verwaltungsgericht* Hamburg report, 15.05.1968, 331-1II-760, StHH.

Complaining neighbours

Although the *Sperrbezirke* were enforced by local police departments, pressure to do so oftentimes came from other residents of the city. Complaint letters to various local administrative bodies are plentiful in both city and state archives. Residents, alone or in groups, framed women selling sex on the street, or the presence or behaviour of pimps and clients, as a danger to minors, public health and public order. By doing this, they played an important role in maintaining and strengthening the divisions embodied in the *Sperrbezirk*.

Complaints often reflected the increased link between transactional sex and automobile use, in particular the sound of car motors, horns, radios and slamming doors.[895] The use of cars by clients, by women who sold sex or third parties offered anonymity, mobility, and could provide a space for the sex itself.[896] Complaints from Cologne's Ehrenstraße referred to the noise of cars and people on the streets as 'unbearable'.[897] Residents argued that this both directly caused health issues due to the sleep disturbance as well as the 'moral endangerment of the children' who were forced 'to listen to the most vicious ways of speaking and absorb a world of filth'.[898] By describing the supposed danger to minors posed by the presence of commercial sex, residents referenced an established ideological rationale, cited in Cologne's *Sperrbezirk* regulation as central justification.[899]

The prevalence of clients and pimps in nuisance complaints is a further interesting development. Whilst Britain's Wolfenden Committee had claimed in 1957 that clients did not cause a nuisance as they did not loiter on the street, residents of West German cities frequently described clients as a threat to public order in their complaints about commercial sex.[900] Partly, these centred on the sounds of cars, yet complainants often also equated clients with members of West Germany's 'guest worker' population, illustrating the racialised and xenophobic nature of assumptions about clients and the presumption of 'guest workers' as endangering public order. Alexander Kraus, in his study of Wolfsburg, sees concerns clearly caught up in the panic around Italian

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[895] Kraus finds similar concerns in Wolfsburg in the early 1970s; Kraus, *Stadt ohne Geschichte?*, 391.
[896] 'Bericht', 24.07.1964, BR-0051-564, LAV NRW.
[897] Ehrenstraße 43 residents, 03.09.1964, BR-0051-564, LAV NRW.
[898] Benesisstraße residents to *Polizeipräsident*, July 1964, BR-0051-564, LAV NRW.
[899] Dickinson, 'Policing Sex', 35; Steinbacher, *Wie der Sex*, 327. Basic Law allowed for the suspension of citizens' protections and freedoms for 'the protection of minors'
[900] Laite, *Common Prostitutes*, 197.

labourers in the city.[901] In Cologne, these narratives appear to have been largely accepted by police and city authorities as legitimate concerns.[902]

Typically, residents demanded intensified policing of their neighbourhood. On numerous occasions complaint letters featured demands to bring an area into the *Sperrbezirk*.[903] This was particularly prominent in complaints from St. Pauli residents who objected to its de facto establishment as new tolerance zone. In Cologne, one protest letter sent ten years after the regulation had been implemented, residents demanded that their neighbourhood be added to the restricted area. As one bureaucrat tasked with the reply scrawled on a copy of the letter, the area 'obviously belonged to the *Sperrbezirk*' already and, indeed, had been part of the restricted area since its foundation.[904] Such comments suggest that, while in some areas 'respectable' women could be caught in the crossfire of overzealous police officers, in others they were able to go about their business without police interference. Despite the greater powers to arrest afforded to police by *Sperrbezirk* regulations, strict enforcement would have required constant police presence across the city, a scenario impossible to fulfil.

The complaint had, in this case, been taken on by the local SPD association. Grievances of this kind were often mobilised within local politics, with figures from the religious community, in Cologne primarily from the Catholic church, or from local party representatives, both from the Social Democrats (SPD) and the Christian Democrats (CDU) taking a leading role. They co-ordinated complaints, resident meetings and protest actions, and functioned as intermediaries between residents and police, city administration and the press. In Cologne, CDU city councillor Fried Wörsdorfer encouraged residents to take matters into their own hands and demanded:

> Take your cameras to the streets, and the car drivers won't return. Each car, that circles our area more than three times, will be noted down.[905]

Wörsdorfer's 'photo hunt', with backing from the local CDU, aimed at photographing both women selling sex and their clients and sending copies to police and the local press.[906] Other actions involved writing letters directly to clients and thus uncovering their connections to the immoral world, or threatening them with possible charges of

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[901] Kraus, *Stadt ohne Geschichte?*, 391–92.
[902] 'Schutz der Jugend in der Öffentlichkeit', 03.01.1964, Acc-361-A190, HAStK.
[903] Kath. Pfarramt St. Robert Bellarmin, 11.08.1961, BR-0051-563, LAV NRW.
[904] SPD *Ortsverein* Cologne-Mitte to *Polizeipräsident*, 01.09.1971, BR-0051-559, LAV NRW.
[905] Herbert Kloss, 'Mit Kamera und Blitzlicht: Fotojagd auf die Lebedamen! Bürger helfen sich selbst', *EXPRESS*, 16.06.1971.
[906] Ibid.

disturbing the peace (*Ruhestörung*).[907] Typically, however, protest actions were confined to letters and statements of complaint, which resulted in police crackdowns on commercial sex in the area or traffic control measures, to stop cars from circling or stopping in certain streets, to prevent prostitution.[908]

Even in the case of Heta C.*, a resident known by Cologne police to be a 'permanent complainant' and prone to exaggeration, complaints led to numerous police actions.[909] She directed her concerns and demands to several local authorities, and had repeated contact with individual officers, in which she documented noise complaints, disruptions to public order linked directly to the presence of women selling sex, as well as pimps and potential clients. A police report from 1967 assessed that she had 'made it her own life's work to clean up the Rheingasse quarter in a moralising and exaggerated manner and to restore order there'.[910] Despite such descriptions of the complainant, and contradictory assessments of the area and of the extent of the supposed disturbances, Heta's complaint letters and phone calls repeatedly led to renewed police presence and patrols in the area. They also directly led to further restrictions, such as earlier closing times for the bars in question.[911]

Although arrest figures and patrols remained high throughout this period, police intervention was irregular and women selling sex in both Hamburg and Cologne modified their behaviour depending on the presence or absence of patrolling officers. Even when on patrol, officers did not always arrest the women they encountered, as one outraged St. Georg resident noted. In his complaint letter he claimed that two officers on patrol greeted the women on the streets with a 'friendly hand signal' and went on their way.[912] Part of their work was observational, 'to maintain constant contact within the relevant circles […] for the purpose of preventative police action'.[913] Moreover, although police intervention was high, it was at no point a constant and wide-reaching presence, often responding to specific resident tips and complaints, coordinated by local politicians, the church, and businesspeople. *Sperrbezirk* policing could not cover the entire city, and thus continued to allow scope for movement.

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[907] Ibid.; 'Kurven die verboten sind', *NRZ*, 13.04.1966; 'Bürger beobachten leichte Mädchen', *NRZ*, 13.04.1966.
[908] 'Belästigung der Bürger im Gebiet der Christuskirche', BR-0051-559, LAV NRW.
[909] 'Vermerk', 02.11.1964, BR-0051-559, LAV NRW.
[910] 'Schutzbereich Mitte', 29.07.1967, BR-0051-559, LAV NRW.
[911] 'Vermerk', 2.8.1967, BR-0051-559, LAV NRW.
[912] 'Persönliche Beläastigung [sic.]', 01.05.1978, 136-1-4617, StHH.
[913] Breuer, 'Auswirkungen der Dirnensperrverordnungen', 02.01.1964, BR-0051-563, LAV NRW.

General figures from both cities, albeit largely estimates, do not indicate an exodus from the two cities or move to alternative work by women who sold sex in response to the *Sperrbezirke*. Police noted that women continued to come from elsewhere, from other West German cities or from further afield and suggested that the number of women selling sex in Cologne was steadily increasing.[914] However, in Hamburg, the tolerated St. Pauli district provided an alternative space, outside of the *Sperrbezirk.* This meant that, by 1970, the vice police spoke of only 35 'stubborn' women continuing to sell sex on the streets of St. Georg.[915]

Hamburg's entertainment district

St. Pauli had a reputation for debauchery that reached far beyond the city's borders, attracting curious tourists, both men and women.[916] Visitors could take in striptease performances, view pornographic films in cinemas or buy pornographic images in newspaper shops. For those interested in transactional sex, there was the Herbertstraße and countless bars. Yet, as Sneeringer argues, 'after 1945 the city played up its reputation as an outpost of liberalism to suppress its Nazi past, win back foreign visitors and contribute to the Federal Republic's integration into the West'.[917] Keeping St. Pauli and its wide-reaching reputation for disrepute and titillation intact remained a central concern for the city that had implications beyond the area itself.

The 1961 decision to keep St. Pauli outside of the *Sperrbezirk* had rested on impressions that the sex industry around the harbour remained outwardly tolerable, and that to change how it was policed would affect its appearance and reputation negatively. Administrators and police officers did not foresee, however, that by implementing a blanket ban on prostitution in St. Georg, the city's sex industry as a whole would be noticeably transformed. Increased policing and powers of arrest in St. Georg, whilst they did not fully remove commercial sex from the area, led many of those selling sex to move to the city's traditional entertainment district around the Reeperbahn. Although this area was not free from police supervision, and the streets of St. Pauli could be subject to multiple patrols a day, solicitation outside of the *Sperrbezirk* proved harder to prosecute.[918]

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[914] Ibid.
[915] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1967-1972, 331-1II-2681, StHH.
[916] Alexander, *Prostitution in Deutschland*, 28. On 1960s St. Pauli: Sneeringer, 'Assembly Line of Joys', 65–96.
[917] Sneeringer, 'Sites of Corruption', 315.
[918] *Verwaltungsgericht* Hamburg report, 15.05.1968, 331-1II-760, StHH.

Before the passage of Hamburg's 1961 *Sperrbezirk*, much of St. Pauli's sex industry had been centred around bars, hotels or the houses in Herbertstraße. With the influx of St. Georg women, however, street prostitution in St. Pauli became more noticeable and reached further into traditionally residential areas.[919] For those selling sex, the effects of the *Sperrbezirk* regulation became clear through increased competition. In 1965, authorities approximated that Hamburg was home to around 3,000 unregistered prostitutes, the majority assumed to be living in St. Pauli.[920] Women who sold sex in Hamburg now largely did so in a far smaller area than pre-1961, both making it more difficult to meet clients and negatively impacting the prices they could demand for their services. Police files thus document a case in which St. Pauli women were encountered by police selling sex in St. Georg, preferring the streets of the *Sperrbezirk* to the competition and deflated prices of St. Pauli.[921]

The expanded police powers over women who sold sex were confined only to the restricted area and officers on the streets of St. Pauli were limited to using older restrictions on 'conspicuous' solicitation to police commercial sex. By the late 1960s, Hamburg's vice police claimed that courts were being more restrictive in their definitions of the term.[922] Officers frequently arrested women who the courts subsequently refused to convict. In the case of Brigitte G.*, arrested for smiling and staring at male passers-by and showing her keys, the courts argued that 'she did not behave differently to many other prostitutes in the area'.[923]

In February 1968, Helga P.* was arrested in St. Pauli and held at the local police station for soliciting in a manner deemed by police to be 'disruptive to public order'. She had been soliciting in Kastanienallee, a street that had recently developed into St. Pauli's most popular location for street prostitution.[924] Two officers of Hamburg's youth protection unit (*Jugendschutztrupp)* pronounced her pullover too tight, that her clothing did not match the weather, and used the fact that she put on a coat when taken to the station as proof of its unsuitability to the weather conditions. The disruption to public order that she posed, they claimed, could only be combatted by her removal and

[919] 'Drucksache für Senatssitzung 238', 28.04.1965, 131-1-II-668, StHH.
[920] Ibid. Estimations of unregistered prostitution vary. One 1970 estimate puts the number in Hamburg at around 1,300: 'Bericht über die Prostitution', 1970, B-Rep-002-6688, LAB.
[921] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1967-1972, 331-1II-2681, StHH.
[922] Ibid.
[923] 'Stellungnahme zu zwei Beschlüssen', 22.03.1968, 331-1II-760, StHH.
[924] Alexander, *Prostitution in Deutschland*, 30.

detention for one hour.[925] The officers later told the court that they had been given descriptions of women who had previously been warned of their disruptive behaviour and instructed to arrest them on encounter.[926]

A guide to prostitution in St. Pauli published that same year described Kastanienallee as a residential street 'made up on both sides of ugly, in part dilapidated-looking apartment buildings. There are a few businessmen engaged in civic activities, and on some houses there are signs indicating guesthouses and hotels'. The street was located close to a police station. At the same time, however, 'the prostitutes stand individually or in groups in front of the front doors, in door niches and […] on the street'.[927] From 1967, when she began renting a room in the basement of a house in Kastanienallee, Helga was regularly one of these women. She later told the court that she typically stood on the street between 10am and 6pm each day, alongside around six others.[928]

After her arrest, Helga took legal action to dispute that she had been a 'disturbance to public order' that needed to be removed from the streets. Whilst she did not deny her profession, she stated that she worked just like others selling sex in St. Pauli.[929] The courts, leaving open the possibility that her appearance had been disruptive to public order, ruled that the detention was not permissible. Her case was covered in the tabloid BILD—'St. Pauli-girl won pullover-war against Hamburg'—in a manner that the Interior Ministry feared could cause 'trouble in daily work with prostitutes'.[930]

Faced with courts often unwilling to convict women of 'conspicuous' solicitation in St. Pauli, Hamburg's police officers made use of technological 'evidence' to strengthen their cases. In 1967, in response to a complaint from a mother living on Kastanienallee, Hamburg's vice police began arresting and photographing women who solicited whilst wearing miniskirts. Yet rather than strengthening the position of Hamburg's vice police, these arrests caused a stir in the local media, and each of the cases were subsequently closed without conviction.[931] National magazine *Der Spiegel*

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[925] *Rechtsabteilung Polizei* to Goldberg, 22.02.1968, 331-1II-760, StHH. On the *Jugendschutztrupp* see: Sneeringer, *A Social History*, 127; Clayton Whisnant, *Male Homosexuality in West Germany: Between Persecution and Freedom, 1945-69* (Basingstoke, 2012), 158.
[926] *Verwaltungsgericht* Hamburg report, 15.05.1968, 331-1II-760, StHH.
[927] Alexander, *Prostitution in St. Pauli*, 119-120.
[928] *Verwaltungsgericht* Hamburg report, 15.05.1968, 331-1II-760, StHH.
[929] *Klage*, Goldberg, 28.02.1968, 331-1II-760, StHH.
[930] 'Vermerk', *Rechtsabteilung*, 16.05.1968, 331-1II-760, StHH.
[931] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1963-1967, 331-1II-2680, StHH.

captured the hypocrisies inherent in this policing;

> Because they had courted customers dressed in miniskirts on St. Pauli's street corners, the vice police temporarily detained a total of ten of the purchasable ladies—while in the bars frequented by teenagers in the nearby Reeperbahn, respectable middle-class daughters danced […] in clothes no less short or coquettish.[932]

In 1968, Hamburg's vice police upgraded their equipment, with a new and better camera, night goggles and recording equipment all to be used in the surveillance of prostitution.[933] In May of the following year, officers hidden in a hotel room filmed five women soliciting on Kastanienallee. Despite turning the films over to the public prosecutors, only one of the five women was successfully prosecuted and fined 500 marks.[934]

The use of such resource-intensive measures suggests a pressure on city politicians, administrators and police to crackdown on commercial sex. Attempts to create physical proof of conspicuous behaviour indicate a desire to achieve not simply arrests but also prosecutions. Police patrols could temporarily remove women selling sex from St. Pauli's streets—Helga P. described how she would duck into the basement when she saw officers patrolling her street—but arrests had only a limited effect on the presence of street prostitution in the area more generally.[935] Street prostitution became a common feature of complaints by other residents, which fed into the continued preoccupation of Hamburg's local authorities with public order in the city.

Bringing St. Pauli into the *Sperrbezirk*

Back in 1964, Hamburg authorities concerned about the situation in the city's 'entertainment district' had convened to discuss possible measures to quell the developments they identified in St. Pauli. Representatives of the district administration, judicial administration, public prosecutor's office and Hamburg's Interior Ministry, all looked to curb street prostitution in St. Pauli. They discussed measures including more street lighting, centralised houses for women selling sex, as well as the possibility of extending the *Sperrbezirk* to include St. Pauli.[936]

Pressure for an extended *Sperrbezirk* increased as the decade went on, particularly from local business owners whose demands were mobilised in the press. From 1968 onwards, demands for a *Sperrbezirk* were also heard from voices with stakes

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[932] 'Noch in Züchten', *Der Spiegel*, 13.08.1967.20/07/2022 12:18:00
[933] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1967-1972, 331-1II-2681, StHH.
[934] Ibid.
[935] *Verwaltungsgericht* Hamburg report, 15.05.1968, 331-1II-760, StHH.
[936] 'Kurzprotokoll: Probleme im Vergnügungsviertel St. Pauli', 24.06.1964, 131-1-II-668, StHH.

in Hamburg's sex industry, namely the managers of Hamburg's newest 'prostitute residences', the *Eros-Center* and the *Palais d'Amour*.[937] Although these houses are explored later in the chapter, it is worth considering briefly their involvement in pressuring for a St. Pauli *Sperrbezirk* in the late 1960s. Horst R., a lawyer representing the *Palais d'Amour* management took threats and complaints to the local press. He told BILD that the city administration had promised to make St. Pauli a *Sperrbezirk.* Instead, he complained, nothing had happened, women continued to sell sex on the street, and half of the rooms in the *Eros-Center* and the *Palais d'Amour* remained empty.[938] Horst's remarks illustrate how investors in St. Pauli's sex industry knew how to mobilise the local media and to frame their demands within narratives of public order.

Pressure also came from St. Pauli residents. They focused on both street- and car-based prostitution and 'all their unpleasant side effects'.[939] In late September 1969, for instance, parents of children at four schools participated in a four day school strike (*Aktion "Sauberer Schulweg"*). They kept their children home from school, arguing that street prostitution constituted a daily, serious danger to children and youth in the area.[940] The Interior Ministry soon spoke of 'marked unease brought out in St. Pauli's residential population by the excesses of prostitution'.[941] Several women who sold sex in the area were unconvinced of the claims that their presence harassed young children. Instead, they claimed local politicians had staged the upset to fill the rooms of the new *Eros-Center*.[942]

At the beginning of the decade, administrators and police representatives had argued that St. Pauli deserved exceptional status, designating it a de facto tolerance zone. Yet by the late 1960s, attitudes to the management of commercial sex in this area had shifted noticeably. When, in 1970, the law was changed at the federal level to allow for separate rules for street prostitution and brothel prostitution in a *Sperrbezirk*— after pressure from Hamburg city-state—Hamburg passed a new 'Regulation on the Prohibition of Prostitution [*Gewerbsunzucht*]', expanding the city's *Sperrbezirk* to include the districts of St. Pauli and Altona **[see A.6.]**.[943]

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[937] Wieland Sandmann, 'Machen die Liebeshäuser dicht?', *BILD*, 09.03.1968.
[938] Ibid.
[939] 'Mitteilung des Senats an die Bürgerschaft', 131-1-II-668, StHH.
[940] Ibid.
[941] 'Vergnügungsviertel St. Pauli', 26.11.1969, 131-1-II-668, StHH.
[942] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1967-1972, 331-1II-2681, StHH.
[943] 'Verordnung über das Verbot der Gewerbsunzucht', 12.05.1970, 136-1-4615, StHH.

St. Pauli was Hamburg's historical entertainment district and, as Sneeringer argues, 'maintaining that touristic product required regulation: visitors came for a walk on the wild side, but unchecked prostitution, violence and swindles could drive them away.'[944] To retain the balance between St. Pauli's role in attracting tourists, preserving Hamburg's liberal reputation and keeping in check the new forms and supposed by-products of commercial sex in the area, city administrators made a number of changes in the new *Sperrbezirk* regulation. Unlike in Cologne, where the traditional 'brothel streets' had been designated part of the *Sperrbezirk*, Hamburg's officials kept Herbertstraße, the last of the city's 'brothel streets' out of the ban. In an area south of the Reeperbahn the ban was limited to the hours between 6am and 8pm.[945] This allowed for street prostitution in a specific area during the night, when, it was argued, children would not encounter women selling sex. City administrators still felt that St. Pauli's 'character' should be retained, but now argued that this could be achieved within the confines of a *Sperrbezirk*. The 1970 regulation resembled Cologne's more closely in wording and avowed intention, now also concentrating on spaces defined as *public* or *visible from within public spaces*, although policing had in practice already focussed on public prostitution. This modified wording and aim of the regulation was in part a response to the sanctioning of two new large-scale 'prostitute residences' in St. Pauli in 1968, alongside the extended possibilities for *Sperrbezirke* at the federal level.

The new *Sperrbezirk* regulation was again accompanied by intensified policing. Officers from Hamburg's vice police and *Kripo* patrolled daily in St. Pauli and St. Georg. 86 of the arrests in 1971 resulted in fines of between 500 and 1,200 marks, whilst prison sentences ranged from two weeks to three months.[946] Although a 1972 report described street prostitution as having been reduced to 'manageable conditions', women selling sex were labelled 'unteachable'.[947] Much like in Cologne and St. Georg, after the implementation of the new *Sperrbezirk*, police noted that St. Pauli women moved to selling sex in bars.[948] Yet despite many women moving to bars or moving around the city in response to policing priorities, officers repeatedly met and arrested

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[944] Sneeringer, 'Sites of Corruption', 315.

[945] 'Verordnung über das Verbot der Gewerbsunzucht', 12.05.1970, 136-1-4615, StHH. The borders were changed in 1980/1981, although the premise remained the same. The 1980 regulation is in force in Hamburg today: Künkel, *Sex, Drugs & Control*, 169.

[946] *Kriminalamt,* 'Schreiben A3/218.30-2-', 27.04.1972, 136-1-4614, StHH.

[947] Ibid.

[948] Klös, 'Das älteste Gewerbe', B-Rep-002-5533, LAB.

the same women selling sex.[949]

West Berlin as outlier

West Berlin, much like Hamburg and Cologne, was home in the 1960s and 1970s to a large number of women who sold sex regularly or sporadically. Estimates from 1970 placed the number at between 3,000 and 4,000 women in the city who regularly sold sex, with the assumption that this number was constantly in flux as women changed location or occupation.[950] Of this, street-based work was the most popular. A report provided to the Berlin senate in 1969 compared these figures to estimates that in Hamburg the number lay closer to 2,600 women working as prostitutes, and that in Cologne there were, in addition to the 1,300 registered women, an unknown number of unregistered women selling sex.[951] The date of these estimates suggests that the disparity may be due to the *Sperrbezirke* in Hamburg and Cologne and their resulting increased powers to arrest women soliciting in the street.

Although each of the three cities had a large population of women who sold sex regularly, the forms and locations of commercial sex in West Berlin adapted to the changing cityscape differently. West Berlin's role as 'outpost' surrounded on all sides by the German Democratic Republic and separated from West Germany itself affected both the city's sex industry and the ways in which it was managed.

Before 1961, West Berlin had a porous border with the GDR. It was unexceptional to live in either West or East Berlin, and to cross the border for work or social activities. Alongside many East Berliners travelling daily to West Berlin, women from East Berlin or the surrounding areas commuted into West Berlin to sell sex, earn West German currency and avoid East German regulations governing commercial sex.[952] At one point, around a quarter of the women featured in the West Berlin police's illegal prostitute index were women who came from the East to sell sex in the West.[953]

When the Berlin Wall was built in 1961, this form of commercial sex border-crossing ended abruptly and Stuttgarter Platz lost much of its importance as a centre for street prostitution. The border around West Berlin reoriented the centres of the city and thus also the areas women and their clients turned to for transactional sex. Although

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[949] *Kriminalamt,* 'Schreiben A3/218.30-2-', 27.04.1972, 136-1-4614, StHH.
[950] 'Bericht über die Prostitution', 1970, B-Rep-002-6688, LAB.
[951] Ibid.
[952] Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 118. On the registration of 'hwG'-women in East Berlin, see: Brüning, *Prostitution in der DDR*, 85-122.
[953] Klös, 'Das älteste Gewerbe', B-Rep-002-5533, LAB; Klös/Klös, 'Von der "Sitte"', 88.

they now converged around areas such as Schöneberg's Bülowbogen or Tiergarten's Straße des 17. Juni, these were not fixed. West Berlin had no suburbs or central entertainment district, and as long as federal law only allowed the passage of *Sperrbezirke* in certain areas of the city, the Senator of the Interior judged that women selling sex would simply be displaced into neighbouring districts by such a regulation.[954] The possibility of a West Berlin *Sperrbezirk* was repeatedly raised and addressed—in a senate inquiry (*kleine Anfrage*) in 1965 from local politicians in Schöneberg and Tiergarten, and in a 1970 report from the Senator of the Interior.[955] In 1970, police Chief Inspector Klös judged that the only possibility to pass a *Sperrbezirk* in West Berlin, considering also the limitations of the city's geography and the legal restrictions, was to ban the sale of sex everywhere, with the exception of specific streets or districts. He also predicted, however, that such a measure would surely result in considerable protests from residents and businesspeople who had previously resigned themselves to the existing situation.[956]

In fact, West Berlin's management of commercial sex from 1958 onwards differed significantly to Hamburg's and Cologne's. The 'Regulation on the Implementation of the Law on Police Responsibilities' passed in 1958, which restricted police involvement in the search for 'hwG'-persons as detailed previously, had reduced the number of arrests on solicitation charges. Beforehand, most arrests for conspicuous solicitation in West Berlin had occurred whilst searching for missing and suspected 'hwG'-persons.[957] After 1958, the processing of such arrests was outsourced to the district police and health offices.[958] West Berlin's police reportedly responded to a Federal Court of Justice decision which determined that prosecutions for conspicuous solicitation (§361,6) needed to be 'unusually' conspicuous, for instance by staring at men, or using sexualised hand signals. The police force therefore decided that the likelihood of a prosecution was disproportionate to the effort required.[959] In 1970, Klös determined that there were 'hardly any' arrests on this basis.[960]

Police intervention in commercial sex instead concentrated on the associated crimes of *Kuppelei* and *Zuhälterei*, although in practice this involved a level of

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[954] 'Bericht über die Prostitution', 1970, B-Rep-002-6688, LAB.
[955] Ibid.; *Senator für Justiz,* 19.12.1969, B-Rep-013-586, LAB.
[956] Klös, 'Das älteste Gewerbe', B-Rep-002-5533, LAB.
[957] 'Verordnung zur Durchführung des PolZG', B-Rep-004-529, LAB.
[958] Klös, 'Das älteste Gewerbe', B-Rep-002-5533, LAB.
[959] Grimm, *Neue Formen der Prostitution*, 40–42.
[960] Klös, 'Das älteste Gewerbe', B-Rep-002-5533, LAB.

surveillance to prove that women were selling sex.[961] Therefore, although the possibility of a *Sperrbezirk* in West Berlin was repeatedly considered, investigated by the Senator of the Interior, and actively pursued by local politicians from Schöneberg and Tiergarten districts, such a regulation was never passed.

Public order and 'prostitute residences'

Even with intensified police enforcement and increasingly harsh punishments, *Sperrbezirke* could not banish women selling sex from the cityscapes of Hamburg and Cologne. Although residents and politicians pressed for *Sperrbezirke* as solution, police departments repeatedly lamented the limitations of such regulations and, along with local authorities, pursued other measures to manage and contain commercial sex. In both cities, the 'prostitute residences' in traditional brothel streets became a sticking point—whilst authorities emphasised that they contained prostitution, their visible presence as centrally located red-light districts, often in states of disrepair, placed them at odds with the regenerating cities.[962] The story of the 'prostitute residences' is enmeshed in the restructuring, renovation, and sanitisation of cities in the second half of the twentieth century.

In the early 1950s, administrators in both Hamburg and Cologne had announced their intentions to close the 'prostitute residences'.[963] Although both cities closed a number in the following years, removing all of the former brothel streets—by evicting women who sold sex, taking police action against illegal brothels or demolishing the buildings—proved a particularly slow and, in Hamburg, incomplete process. Here, West Berlin again functions as a counterpoint. As a city without the same strong tradition of brothel streets as found in Hamburg and Cologne, administrators were not faced with similarly evident red-light districts in the city.[964]

In 1959, Hamburg authorities demolished the Ulricusstraße houses and the residents of twenty-five buildings—around 200 women—dispersed across the city. Some of the younger landlords took over bars or guesthouses. A large proportion of the tenants found private flats in St. Georg and St. Pauli, although some tried their luck in Herbertstraße or left Hamburg entirely. Hamburg's vice police later linked the

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[961] Ibid.
[962] Ibid.; 'Senatskommission über Bordellfragen', 20.12.1954, 131-1-II-668, StHH; G. Kähler, *Von der Speicherstadt*, 139.
[963] *Urteil Landesverwaltungsgericht*, 14.03.1953, 131-1-II-668, StHH; *Niederschrift Sonderausschuss,* 01.02.1954, Acc-361-A190, HAStK.
[964] Hüchtker, 'Prostitution und städtische Öffentlichkeit'.

demolition of Ulricusstraße to the increase in street prostitution in St. Georg, judging that it would have been better to give the women the opportunity to set up another street at their own cost.[965]

In 1964, Cologne administrators reached similar conclusions when they closed the houses in Nächelsgasse—14 buildings housing 89 women selling sex—citing public order concerns.[966] They had deemed these 'prostitute residences' a particular threat, for the surrounding streets were becoming once again a 'normal residential area' and a new social and religious centre had opened nearby.[967] The presence of women selling sex had been the subject of numerous complaints from both local residents and local representatives of the Catholic Church.[968]

Public order concerns had featured as impetus to close these former brothel streets. This was evident also to Nächelsgasse proprietors and landlords who responded to the proposed closures by banding together and announcing their plan to rent their rooms to 'guest workers', a prospect the authorities considered 'perhaps even worse' than the current situation.[969] This narrative of 'guest workers' as public order threat played an important role in the discussions on the future of Nächelsgasse. In October 1963, Dr Braubach of the Cologne SPD had told the city council that he had 'nothing against guest workers' but that they brought with them 'a plethora of problems' including an increased demand for prostitution, some criminal elements, as well as 'unstable characters' who might be tempted to make their money through pimping.[970] Cologne authorities subsequently stepped in directly to preclude Nächelsgasse from housing a separate group of unwanted residents. After much discussion of the public order threat posed by 'guest workers' in the city, representatives of city authorities inspected the houses in question and found that they 'did not meet the minimal requirements for housing foreign workers'.[971] The poor quality, cramped dormitories typically used to house 'guest workers' have been much documented, yet crucially, this housing was often located outside of city centres, separated from the general population.[972] In 1968, 64% of West Germany's male 'guest workers' lived in

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[965] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1953-1963, 331-1II-2679, StHH.
[966] *Ordnungsverfügung* Nächelgasse 8, 18.06.1964, Acc-361-A190, HAStK.
[967] *Vorlage:* 'Schließung der Dirnenhäuser', 04.06.1964, Acc-361-A190, HAStK.
[968] Ibid. and *Ordnungsverfügung* Nächelgasse 8, 18.06.1964, Acc-361-A190, HAStK.
[969] 'Belegung der Häuser […] mit Ausländern', 13.07.1964, Acc-361-A190, HAStK.
[970] 'Verhandlungen des Rates der Stadt Köln', 07.10.1963, Acc-361-A190, HAStK.
[971] 'Belegung der bisherigen Dirnenhäuser', 16.07.1964, Acc-361-A190, HAStK. On requirements for adequate 'guest worker' housing, see: Miller, *Turkish Guest Workers*, 83.
[972] Kaya, 'Inclusion and Exclusion', 62; Miller, *Turkish Guest Workers*, 78–91.

employer-owned dormitories.[973] The intervention to stop 'guest workers' moving into Nächelsgasse did not stop the the street's former residents from dispersing across the city, similar to the women of Hamburg's Ulricusstraße.

After the city's closure of Nächelsgasse, resident complaints coalesced around Cologne's Kleine Brinkgasse. In contrast, Im Stavenhof in the Eigelstein district attracted far fewer complaints from city residents. The 'prostitute residences' here were located amongst residential buildings. By 1962, Im Stavenhof had been home to the city's sex industry for over thirty years, and housed around 43 registered women, aged between 35 and 65 years, whilst no resident complaints had been registered.[974]

Although administrators repeatedly considered closing Kleine Brinkgasse, their apprehension of a new group of unhoused women prevailed throughout the 1960s. Instead, they looked to minimise the disturbances of Kleine Brinkgasse whilst maintaining them as location to contain prostitution. The tenants of Cologne's 'prostitute residences' were already forbidden from showing themselves at their windows, yet in 1961, the city constructed brick walls at the street's entrance. These walls reinforced the moral geographies of the city, physically separating commercial sex and its supposed immorality from the 'respectable' public.[975]

These measures proved insufficient, as residents of the surrounding streets protested that a simple wall could not shelter 'the respectable population' from any disturbances or dangers.[976] Some sent in photographs of Kleine Brinkgasse itself **[see A.7.]**, demonstrating the residents' involvement in extra-legal practices of surveillance, which could have palpable consequences for women who sold sex in a 'prostitute residence' if action was taken as a result. To mollify the complainants, the city administration put in force further controls. Whilst the women of Kleine Brinkgasse themselves offered to limit their opening hours to midnight at weekends, new restrictions demanded that the entrance to the street be locked at this time to guarantee that women working there would abide by the new time restrictions. To ensure that they could not lean out, the city installed chains across house windows. In a move that both lent city efforts credibility and enforced the role of the 'upstanding citizens' as policy

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[973] Ibid., 100.

[974] 'Wohnverhältnisse in der Straße "Im Stavenhof"', 03.01.1962; Kiehne to *Oberstadtdirektor,* 18.01.1962; Memo, 10.01.1962, all Acc-361-A190, HAStK.

[975] I borrow the term moral geographies from geographers such as Hubbard, "Cleansing the Metropolis," 1693; Howell et al., "Managed Zones for Sex Workers," 234; Prior et al., "Planning, Law, and Sexuality," 354.

[976] 'Auswüchse der Prostitution', BR-0051-564, LAV NRW; Breuer, 'Auswirkungen der Dirnensperrverordnungen', 02.01.1964, BR-0051-563, LAV NRW.

enforcers, residents of neighbouring streets were given information sheets detailing the restrictions imposed upon the 'prostitute residences'.[977]

And yet, despite repeated complaints about Kleine Brinkgasse, Cologne's city administration tolerated the residences throughout the decade. The priority of the city's prostitution policy was to keep women off the street and out of the public eye, providing notable parallels with traditional regulation, which viewed brothels as 'keeping the trade out the public's […] view'.[978] The prospect of closing the houses posed the threat of a worse disruption to public order because it might result in an uptick in street prostitution. Even when 'prostitute residences' became the focus of concerted resident campaigns, city administrators were hesitant to close them. In 1964, chief municipal director Adenauer commented that the women of Kleine Brinkgasse were too young and looked too good. If the city were to close the houses, he ruminated, the women could easily choose to make their money on the streets.[979]

Police departments in both Hamburg and Cologne placed restrictions on women living in 'prostitute residences'. As with Kleine Brinkgasse in Cologne, Hamburg's authorities obscured the view to Herbertstraße with a wall. Time and again, city administrations were faced with the tension of keeping 'prostitute residences' despite resident complaints, or closing them and allowing women to disperse across the city. The fear of women dispersing across the city, as in the case of the Ulricusstraße closures, likely contributed to the survival of the Herbertstraße houses in St. Pauli. Although the street's demolition remained a subject of discussion in the context of a planned renovation of the district around the Reeperbahn, Herbertstraße remained home to 'prostitute residences' throughout the period.[980] The continued presence of brothel streets, be it in Hamburg or Cologne, was interpreted by many in the city as an urgent public order concern. Despite this, West German police and city administrators remained wedded to a central belief of traditional regulation—that, by containing prostitution, brothels protected public order.

'A whorehouse fit for the famous German economic miracle'

Although Hamburg had closed many of the former brothel streets and signalled its

[977] Adenauer to complainant, 12.11.1964, BR-0051-564, LAV NRW.
[978] de Schaepdrijver, 'Regulated Prostitution in Brussels', 90.
[979] Adenauer to complainant, 12.11.1964, BR-0051-564, LAV NRW.
[980] 'Drucksache für Senatssitzung 238', 28.04.1965, 131-1-II-668, StHH.

intention that Herbertstraße should meet a similar fate, local administrators in 1964 discussed the implementation of new 'prostitute residences' to remove the sale of sex from the streets of St. Pauli.[981] Unlike the former brothel streets, these new-builds were to contain the city's prostitution less obviously, but equally accessible to potential clients. City representatives reacted favourably to two proposals for modern 'prostitute residences' in St. Pauli submitted for review by private investors. The first project was led by Willi Bartels, a 'well-known St. Pauli businessman', the second a joint venture of Herbertstraße landlords.[982] The investors argued that the planned buildings could house around 265 of the city's prostitutes, and so curtail street prostitution in the area.[983]

This more marked influence of private investors on the forms and spaces of commercial sex in the city was a notable change. Bartels had made a number of investments in post-war Hamburg, primarily hotels in St. Pauli. His involvement in the local citizen's association, his status as a long-time resident of the area, and establishment connections lent him respectability despite any links to the sexualised offerings of St. Pauli.[984] By 1985, he owned more than sixty establishments, gaining him the title of 'King of St. Pauli' in the local press.[985] His involvement in the new 'prostitute residence', given the name *Eros-Center*, illustrates the importance of local business investors in the containment of the city's sex industry, and the increased privatisation of the management of commercial sex.

The 1967 opening of the new *Eros-Center* was followed in quick succession by the *Palais d'Amour*, the second venture, in July 1968. Although privately funded and managed, their existence was a culmination of collaborative efforts by city administrators and private investors. Rather than the outlawed 'salon' rooms, the buildings had open courtyards to facilitate contact between residents and their clients. Meeting outside, but in a contained courtyard, allowed them to skirt both restrictions on on-street solicitation and those on 'salon' rooms for meeting clients. The new residences were widely covered in the West German national and local press. A 'guide' to prostitution later wrote:

> Even before the Eros-Center was officially and ceremonially opened, people across the world knew what had been created in Hamburg-St. Pauli: a whorehouse fit for the famous German economic miracle, a brothel made of glass, steel and concrete, with

[981] 'Probleme im Vergnügungsviertel St. Pauli', 24.06.1964, 131-1-II-668, StHH.
[982] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1963-1967, 331-1II-2680, StHH.
[983] Ibid.
[984] Sneeringer, 'Assembly Line of Joys', 65–96; idem., 'Sites of Corruption', 331.
[985] 'St. Pauli braucht mehr Qualität', *Hamburger Abendblatt*, 09.02.1985.

elevators, underground garages and black tiled bathrooms.[986]

The Hamburg residences were not the first large-scale 'prostitute residences' in West Germany. In 1957, Stuttgart had opened its *Dreifarbenhaus*, followed a few years later by Düsseldorf's house *Hinter dem Bahndamm* (behind the rail embankment).[987] Before opening his *Eros-Center*, Bartels visited both Stuttgart and Düsseldorf, later describing the first as outdated, the second as too cheaply-built.[988] Although still 'prostitute residences', the *Eros-Center* and the *Palais d'Amour* were a world away from the old brothel streets, small houses in disrepair replaced by new sanitised blocks, unassuming to the outside and unashamedly modern on the inside. Bartels' *Eros-Center*, became the namesake of modern, large-scale, privately-owned 'prostitute residences' across West Germany.[989]

The new Eros-Centers were marketed as sites of sexual freedom, with the client as modern consumer. As Sybille Steinbacher has argued regarding the commercialisation of sex more generally, the individual's ability to participate in the sexualised market became a symbol of rising living standards: 'Sex and everything that went with it became a consumable leisure activity and a sign of a good, a modern life, so to speak'.[990] However, this new freedom did not extend to women who chose to sell sex, as they continued to face the same level of police and health office surveillance, as well as societal stigma, for their labour.

For local authorities, however, the potential of Eros-Centers to keep women who sold sex from the streets, and prostitution largely hidden from public view, was paramount. The interests of city administrators and private investors therefore did not seamlessly converge. When the district office refused to issue an alcohol licence to the new *Palais d'Amour*—as the sale of alcohol in a 'prostitute residence' would turn it into a 'brothel-like' establishment—their lawyer took to the press and threatened closure, unless the senate reversed the decision. His statement—'let the senate see what to do with the St. Pauli girls then'—illustrates the power and leverage investors felt they had, as long as they could claim to be tackling the issue of street prostitution.[991] They framed their role as preserving public order, recognising the strength of this argument in negotiations. Although the *Eros-Center* was similarly not granted an alcohol licence, its

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[986] Alexander, *Prostitution in Deutschland*, 33.
[987] 'Vom Asphaltsdschungel ins Eros-Center?', *Concepte,* Acc-672-A13, HAStK.
[988] 'Möglichst anheimelnd', *Der Spiegel*, 02.04.1967.
[989] 'OHNE EHE ALLES UNZUCHT', 69.
[990] Steinbacher, *Wie der Sex*, 355.
[991] 'Kein Schnaps im "Palais d'Amour"', *Die Welt*, 04.09.1968.

manager often preferred to pay subsequent fines rather than forgo this profitable avenue.[992] The *Palais d'Amour* chose to remodel a toilet to become notorious bar *Zur Ritze*, adorned with a mural of two open legs and deliberately separated from the *Palais d'Amour* itself. Waiters then carried drinks from the bar into the courtyard.[993]

By outsourcing certain elements of the city's management of commercial sex to private investors, Hamburg's authorities re-established brothels on a larger scale, without taking responsibility for them as a city. In doing so, however, they also created different constituencies with bargaining power in the argument about how to manage transactional sex in the city.

An Eros-Center in Cologne

Plans for a similar modern prostitute residence had, in various forms, been underway in Cologne since 1964.[994] Looking also to Düsseldorf, SPD city coucillor Braubach visited *Hinter dem Bahndamm* incognito.[995] Yet in 1966 the *Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger* reported the myriad of difficulties impeding this course of action.[996] To find a suitable location and a private individual willing to both invest and take the legal responsibility for this venture had proven difficult. Cologne did not have an entertainment area like St. Pauli and administrators instead encouraged that the new large-scale 'prostitute residence' be located out of sight, outside of the *Sperrbezirk* and away from residential areas. Neighbouring Düsseldorf functioned as a warning, where *Kuppelei* charges had reportedly been pressed against the city's chief municipal director and the city administration for providing land for a similar venture.[997] Cologne thus needed an independent investor willing to take on the task.[998]

Once this was achieved, Cologne's homonymous *Eros-Center* opened on 11 January 1972. It was a high-rise building on Hornstraße outside of the *Sperrbezirk* and contained 186 apartments. As in Hamburg, it was the culmination of many years of behind-the-scenes discussion and compromise between administrators and investors.

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[992] 'Erster Pächter hat gekündigt', *Welt am Sonntag*, 08.09.1968.

[993] Barth, Reeperbahn, 112. In 1971, the Wolfsburg *Bienenkorb* came to a similar solution, separating the bar from the neighbouring 'room rental': Kraus, *Stadt ohne Geschichte?*, 407.

[994] 'Sofortmaßnahmen einleiten', *KR*, 06.06.1964.

[995] '6000 Mark'.

[996] Klaus Zöller, 'Dirnenhaus ist schon geplant', *K-StA*, 13.08.1966.

[997] 'Schwere Zeiten für leichte Mädchen', *NL-DD*, 10.08.1961; 'Bericht über die Bekämpfung des Dirnenunwesens', 1966, BR-2050-7, LAV NRW.

[998] Neuburg city officials approached a real estate investor about opening a brothel in the 1970s: Staiger, *Legalized Prostitution*, 96.

Private investor Rolf Schneider from Cologne, initially sole owner of the building, offered his services as proprietor.[999] By the time the *Eros-Center* eventually opened its doors, multiple investors, primarily from Switzerland and south Germany, had joined the venture.[1000] Controversies in the local press also indicate a high level of city involvement, asit emerged that the Cologne city administration had initially bought the land intended for the *Eros-Center* from the national railways, before selling half of it on. Schneider later claimed to have expanded the building in 1973 after repeated consultations with Cologne police and city administration, adding another sixty-three rooms, new lifts, a new courtyard, a summer terrace, swimming pool, sauna, boutique, and hairdressing salon.[1001] Once again, the older brothel streets had been replaced with an Eros-Center for the new age.

This apparently private enterprise emerged out of Cologne's policy priorities of removing prostitution from public view, opting to put the development of new spaces for commercial sex into private hands. Although some Kleine Brinkgasse landlords tried to group together and found their own Eros-Center—arguing that it made more sense to entrust such a venture to those with experience in the sector—Cologne's city administration blocked this attempt after protests from local business owners.[1002] Across West Germany, administrators allowed private investors to open and manage houses for commercial sex—brothels in all but name.[1003] The privatisation of West Germany's sex industry functioned explicitly within city policies to manage prostitution, in a context where federal law prohibited police or city involvement in brothels or brothel-like establishments.[1004]

Chief inspector Kohnen of Cologne's *Kripo* reported that the location of Cologne's *Eros-Center* was chosen in direct consideration of the city centre's renovation.[1005] City administrators argued that, with the *Eros-Center*, the demand or need for inner-city 'residences' was now overcome.[1006] Without consideration for the change of circumstances this would entail for the women of the former brothel streets, it

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[999] ECK administration to Schäfer, 25.07.1978, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.
[1000] Wilfried Hommen, 'Sogar ein Schweizer will mit Eros-Center Geld machen', *KR*, 20.03.1971.
[1001] 'Eros und Grundstücke', *KR*, 14.01.1970.
[1002] 'Zweites Eros-Center abgelehnt', *K-StA*, 11.03.1969.
[1003] On Munich: Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 249.
[1004] On privatisation in London: Frank Mort, *Capital Affairs: London and the Making of the Permissive Society* (New Haven/London, 2010).
[1005] 'Sitte' to *Gemeentepolitie* Rotterdam: Eros-Center, 06.12.1974, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.
[1006] 'Antrag gegen Schließung', F.F., February 1972, BR-0051-564, LAV NRW.

was treated as a question of mathematics; would the rooms in the centre be sufficient for the women currently registered in Cologne's remaining 'prostitute residences'? The houses of Kleine Brinkgasse were closed for good on 24 January 1972, those of Im Stavenhof following in March.[1007]

Closing Kleine Brinkgasse and Im Stavenhof

The closure of the Kleine Brinkgasse and Im Stavenhof houses had been a goal of repeated resident protests and city administration meetings, yet in the local press one Kleine Brinkgasse woman was quoted: 'No-one asked us, what we want, […] Many of us would love to stay here!'[1008] Others expressed concerns about the future facing the older inhabitants of Im Stavenhof, who they feared would be unable to make the rent in the new *Eros-Center* and would suffer under the competition.[1009] One woman, resident in Im Stavenhof for over thirty years, reportedly claimed: "[if they open the Eros-Center] I'll take my bed and start selling sex under the Mühlheimer bridge!".[1010] Dr Schäfer, city council alderman, discounted concerns over their future:

> Eight will work as cleaning staff in the new Eros-Center, two will become supervisors. The others will get rooms on the ground floor, so that they don't have to climb any stairs![1011]

His response suggests that professional and private concerns of the women remained entirely absent from considerations regarding their future, their removal from both the space itself and from public perception taking precedence.

Despite many complaints to the city about the streets—Dr Schäfer claimed to have received seventy written complaints about Kleine Brinkgasse alone—views in Cologne on the closure were mixed.[1012] An interest group of shop owners in the area told the city and the local media that their profits would decrease if the women were expelled from Kleine Brinkgasse.[1013] Neighbours of the Im Stavenhof houses and local shopkeepers signed a petition stating that they did not feel harassed by the presence of women who sold sex.[1014] Perhaps surprisingly, CDU councillors also argued against the closure, pointing to the increase in street and car-based prostitution after the earlier

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[1007] 'Neuer Hausbesitzer will Dirnen hinaussetzen'.
[1008] Braun, 'Abschied'.
[1009] Ibid.
[1010] Werner Haas, 'Stadt will sich im Eros-Center für soziale Mieten einsetzen', *KR*, 27.01.1971.
[1011] Braun, 'Abschied'.
[1012] Zöller, 'Häuser werden versiegelt'.
[1013] Helmut Signon, 'Bald müssen 109 Dirnen ihre Koffer packen', *KR*, 15.12.1971.
[1014] Arne Dreßler, 'Stüverhoff: Rotlicht am Eigelstein', in *Der Eigelstein: Drunter und Drüber*, ed. Mario Kramp and Marcus Trier (Cologne, 2014), 235.

closure of Nächelsgasse, and claiming that the new *Eros-Center* was too far out of the city centre to provide a realistic alternative. They presented this distance as a particular problem for 'guest worker' clients who had no access to a car, and who would thus continue to search for sex in the city itself.[1015] The women of Kleine Brinkgasse engaged with the press, expressly stating that they did not want to move to the Eros-Center, citing the conditions and costs. Some even threatened to solicit at the building's entrance instead. The rooms, they stated provocatively, could instead house underage prostitutes or those who had 'guest worker' clients, and thus undercut their prices, reproducing hierarchies of respectability in commercial sex.[1016] Nevertheless, despite opposition, the city set the closures of Kleine Brinkgasse and Im Stavenhof in motion.

In the face of these measures to determine the lives and working conditions of the women from Cologne's 'prostitute residences', a number of inhabitants, alongside the leaseholders and house owners, resorted to legal measures and sued against the closure of the houses.[1017] At this point, 109 women were registered in the Kleine Brinkgasse houses, with around 50 in Im Stavenhof.[1018] They engaged with formal legal procedures and insisted on a personal right to retain both home and workplace. The house owners, madams and residents of Kleine Brinkgasse initiated a test case trial, with one owner, one madam and one resident standing in for all of the Kleine Brinkgasse houses in the battle against the city.[1019] Although the *Kölnische Rundschau* reported in December 1971 that some of the Kleine Brinkgasse women who signed to go to trial had been put under pressure by the house owners, other papers suggested that this information came from the manager of the *Eros-Center* himself.[1020] Around 60% of the Brinkgasse women signed to allow the trial to take place in their name.[1021] Despite this challenge, the measure remained in place and the women were evicted in early 1972.

In February 1972, when city authorities issued an administrative order

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[1015]'CDU: Brinkgasse muß bleiben', *EXPRESS*, 26.07.1969; 'Ist das neue Eros-Center zu weit weg?', *K-StA*, 26.07.1969.

[1016] 'Liebes-Damen bangen um ihre Existenz!', *EXPRESS*, 26.01.1970. Hierarchies based on client skin colour and nationality were less clear in Hamburg; Kahmann/Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution*, 89.

[1017] Herbertstraße landlords had previously issued a joint legal challenge to Hamburg police, after being told to remove the *Koberfenster,* 1951-1953: 331-1II-759, StHH.

[1018] Signon, 'Bald müssen 109 Dirnen'.

[1019] Klaus Zöller, 'Stadt gewann erste Runde', *K-StA*, 24.12.1971.

[1020] 'Kampf um die Kleine Brinkgasse', *KR*, 16.12.1971; 'Gasse geht vor Gericht', *K-StA*, 16.12.1971.

[1021] Ibid.

forbidding the residents of Im Stavenhof to sell sex either in the street or in the houses themselves, the residents and owners here similarly took to the courts to challenge their evictions. Klara A.* had lived and worked in Im Stavenhof 8 for around forty years when the city administration acted to evict her, citing the 'moral endangerment' of minors and the harassment to other residents and visitors to the streets by the Stavenhof women as reason.[1022] Although her lawyer directly referenced concerns about the Im Stavenhof women who, he argued, would find no place in the Eros-Center, the court upheld the city's removal plans, refuting his arguments—in particular the prediction of higher rents in the *Eros-Center*—as 'clearly wrong'. Klara, for her attempt to challenge the measures enacted against her, was required to pay a substantial fine (3,000 marks). The court found that the city legally had the right to remove prostitutes from their homes 'for only then is the guarantee given that the rooms will not continue to be used for the purposes of prostitution despite the ban'.[1023] It judged the assumed inevitable criminality of women who sold sex sufficed to evict them—even if the eviction would result in homelessness.

The court judgements explicitly upheld the normative order of bourgeois heterosexuality. Anyone involved in transactional sex was portrayed as a threat 'regardless of whether this activity is prohibited by law or punishable in criminal law'.[1024] The judgement in the case of Im Stavenhof 12 described prostitution as a threat to the 'generally accepted values' of 'youth protection' and 'the protection of marriage and the family', protected values in West German Basic Law. These arguments proved particularly well-chosen, as other articles of West German constitution, such as Article 13 on the inviolability of the home, could be bypassed for the purposes of 'youth protection'.[1025]The 'protection of marriage and the family' was in this case restricted to removing evidence of commercial sex from view rather than in its entirety, with the expectation that women would move to the new *Eros-Center*.

In judging the forced removals as legitimate, these courtroom decisions worked with the city administration to further determine the spatialities of the city. Central to the decision was the necessity of a total removal of these women from the infamous streets, the new *Eros-Center* providing an alternative space for their work. Whilst these court documents disregard the human element and only the legal arguments and

[1022] 'Widerspruch', K.A., 21.02.1972, BR-0051-564, LAV NRW.
[1023] Ibid.
[1024] 'Antrag gegen Schließung' (F.F.), February 1972, BR-0051-564, LAV NRW.
[1025] Steinbacher, *Wie der Sex*, 327.

judgements of the case remain, legal judgements helped determine the spaces of the city.

The interpersonal aspect of these closures also proves interesting. Although Dr Schäfer had initiated the closure order, he separately promised four women of Im Stavenhof, aged between 50 and 65, that they could stay in their houses until 30 April whilst they searched for a new home. When their new landlord, the nephew of the previous owner, wanted to put the women on the streets, threatened them daily, and let workmen into their flats without telling them, Klara A. turned to her former opponent, Dr Schäfer, for help, who recommended the women make use of their tenant's rights and resist.[1026]

Despite their public protests, it seems that ultimately women acquiesced to the move after they lost their legal challenges to the eviction.[1027] Police investigations found that, in the months after opening, approximately 95% of the *Eros-Center*'s 186 rooms were occupied. In comparison, around 180 women were registered as living in the houses of Im Stavenhof and Kleine Brinkgasse before their closure. Only 7 of the Eros-Center's early inhabitants claimed to have previously worked on the streets, suggesting that a number had moved either from Cologne's 'prostitute residences' or from further afield.[1028] The concerns they had expressed—of higher rents and increased competition—would prove to be well-founded.

'The largest—nicest—and best organised Eros-Center in Europe'

Women who moved to Cologne's new *Eros-Center* continued to be subject to frequent health inspections and a high level of police supervision, including patrols and special operations.[1029] Their surroundings were, however, markedly different from the previous 'prostitute residences'. Unlike the older buildings, the *Eros-Center* offered women individual furnished two-room apartments, with a shared kitchenette, monitored day and night.[1030]

The *Eros-Center* managers, like the madams of Kleine Brinkgasse and Im Stavenhof before them, had to traverse the fine line between brothel and 'prostitute residence'. To avoid a procurement charge, the management could not be seen to be

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[1026] 'Neuer Hausbesitzer will Dirnen hinaussetzen'.
[1027] Schäfke, *Das neue Köln*, 526.
[1028] 'Erkenntnis- und Erfahrungsanfrage', 23.06.1972, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.
[1029] See BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.
[1030] 'Verdacht der Ausbeutung von Dirnen', to *Kripo* Mannheim, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.

profiting inordinately from its tenants. This meant that the rent should not differ greatly from typical rent prices. However, the *Eros-Center* managers circumvented these restrictions by subjecting tenants to additional costs, regardless of whether they made use of the 'services'. Residents reported having to supplement a mandatory thirty marks for drinks each day out of their own income, as well as a further three marks for contraceptives and tissues. In addition, they were urged to visit the in-house hairdresser, which charged 'inflated prices', and forbidden from bringing their own groceries into the centre (a policy implemented through regular checks), to ensure they made use of in-house offers.[1031] Inhabitants were additionally required to pay for a phone line in each room (a feature that most had explicitly asked not to have) for an extra twenty-four marks a week, as well as a one-time installation cost of sixty marks for a new cash box.[1032] Although the rent costs themselves were curbed, the centre's administration found other ways to profit at the expense of the new inhabitants.[1033] Tenants who had come from working in the older 'prostitute residences' reported experiencing a loss of earnings, with the effects of greater competition exacerbated by the range of extra costs placed upon the individual.[1034]

Interestingly, Schneider, from the *Eros-Center*'s administration, wrote to Dr Schäfer in 1978 to complain about women leaving the establishment and to demand leniency in the restrictions imposed upon the centre. He emphasised the difficulties the city had faced in finding a willing proprietor for this endeavour, the measures he had taken to accommodate the city's wishes and the taxes his tenants had been made to pay. He attributed a tax figure of around 4.3 million marks directly to the work of the *Eros-Center*. Schneider held the city and police and their, by contrast, 'extremely lax measures' against various 'brothel-like establishments' across Cologne responsible for the steadily declining number of occupants, alongside a supposed wish by the women to avoid paying taxes or attend the regular health inspections. He demanded to be allowed to advertise for the *Eros-Center*, for his tenants to be exempt from 'time-wasting examinations' at the health office, and for permission to open the house's facilities to visitors. His closing remarks illustrate the interplay between commercial and regulatory priorities, between the *Eros-Center* and the Cologne city administration:

[1031] Grundlach to ECK management, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.
[1032] The *Eros-Center* management disputed the claims: ECK management to Grundlach, 24.04.1973, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.
[1033] The legal obstacles (and this workaround) featured in: Zöller, 'Dirnenhaus ist schon geplant'.
[1034] 'Erkenntnis- und Erfahrungsanfrage', 23.06.1972, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.

> We cannot believe that the city of Cologne, on whose initiative the largest—nicest—and best organised Eros Center in Europe was formed, watches on as this laboriously created order is slowly but surely destroyed by illegal and uncontrollable businesses and individuals.[1035]

Here, as in Hamburg, the city had allowed business interests an influential role and voice in the management of commercial sex in the city.

As the years passed, city authorities continued to work with Cologne's *Eros-Center*. By the mid-1970s however, police reports became increasingly concerned about the large proportion of migrant women in the *Eros-Center*, whilst German women continued to seek out other spaces to house their sexual labour, away from the police supervision and material and financial restrictions.[1036] In Hamburg, many continued to prefer working the houses on Herbertstraße, which were thoroughly renovated by leaseholders in the mid-1970s and continued to attract tourists and visitors to the city.[1037] More generally, it was soon clear that Eros-Centers would not reduce street prostitution. Indeed, Hamburg's vice police later recorded that they had attracted women from elsewhere including a 'strong colony' of women from North Rhine-Westphalia.[1038] A 1972 investigation found that West German cities with Eros-Centers rarely saw a reduction in street prostitution, citing that women could not or did not want to pay the rents demanded of them.[1039]

No Eros-Center in West Berlin?

West Berlin, unlike Cologne, Hamburg, Düsseldorf or Stuttgart, did not install an Eros-Center. When a private individual requested a concession for such a house in late 1969, Berlin's Senator for the Interior dismissed the endeavour.[1040] This was despite support amongst local CDU politicians in the Tiergarten district who had expressed concern about street prostitution and suggested a larger 'prostitute residence' could minimise, if not remove, disruptive elements.[1041] Yet, whilst local politicians, particularly in Schöneberg and Tiergarten, suggested *Sperrbezirke* or Eros-Centers as measures to control commercial sex in the city, they were repeatedly dismissed by city-wide administrative bodies, who pointed to semi-legal brothel-like establishments across the

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[1035] ECK administration to Schäfer, 25.07.1978, BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.
[1036] See: BR-0051-561, LAV NRW.
[1037] Tschocke/Reiser, *Domenica*, 14.
[1038] *Chronik der 'Sitte'*, 1967-1972, 331-1II-2681, StHH.
[1039] 'Kommunale Korrespondenz 245', 21.08.1972, 136-1-4614, StHH.
[1040] *Senator Inneres*, 11.12.1969, B-Rep-013-586, LAB.
[1041] Protocol, *Bezirksverordneten-Versammlung* Tiergarten, 22.10.1969, B-Rep-013-586, LAB.

city, which had done little to nothing to curb street prostitution.[1042] A 1970 report for the West Berlin senate found Eros-Centers unsuitable for reducing street or bar prostitution in Berlin, with reference to the city's closed borders and dispersed sex industry. They argued that the number of women selling sex was too high to encourage enough to work there and cited a prostitute residence' in Schöneberg's Fuggerstraße—where half of the apartments lay empty—as evidence of Berlin women's general unwillingness to enter such houses. A new concentration of street prostitution in the surrounding area was similarly put forward in argument against a large Eros-Center.[1043]

Berlin's Chief Inspector Klös judged that evidence from other cities suggested that Eros-Centers were less disruptive than street or bar-based prostitution. However, he argued that this would require numerous large houses and referenced the situation in Hamburg—'the continued parallel existence of street prostitution and prostitute residences'—as unsatisfactory. Organising numerous large-scale 'prostitute residences', he argued, would also need the courts to rethink understandings of what constituted a brothel.[1044] The comparison with St. Pauli also featured in Berlin's Justice Senator's concerns, who claimed that the *Eros-Center* had simply created a vacuum to be filled with new women moving to Hamburg to sell sex.[1045]

While the authorities in West Berlin argued against a large-scale Eros-Center in the city, smaller 'brothel-like' houses were located across the city. The continued coexistence of street prostitution and 'prostitute residences' in Berlin's Kaiser-Friedrich-Straße and Potsdamer Straße, for instance, featured amongst arguments against allowing an Eros-Center in the city, for they did not reduce disturbances to public order.[1046]

'A bad address also has its charms'

By the late 1970s, sexualised commercial interests had become increasingly visible and intertwined in West Germany. Hamburg remained wedded to St. Pauli's special status as the country's most famous red-light district, cementing the city-state's liberal reputation and providing guaranteed tourist revenues. Respected investors profited off the city's sex industry; in 1980, almost all of the houses in Hamburg's Herbertstraße

[1042] See: *Senator Wirtschaft*, 17.12.1969, and *Senator Justiz*, 19.12.1969, B-Rep-013-586, LAB.
[1043] 'Bericht über die Prostitution', 1970, B-Rep-002-6688, LAB.
[1044] Klös, 'Das älteste Gewerbe', B-Rep-002-5533, LAB.
[1045] See: *Senator Justiz*, 19.12.1969, B-Rep-013-586, LAB.
[1046] Ibid.

were owned by local businesspeople or bankers.[1047] More generally, sexualised images had become increasingly prevalent across West Germany. Magazines and advertisements featured images of semi-nude women, and bustling city high streets were populated by new above-ground erotica shops, including the Beate Uhse store on Cologne's Hohe Straße.[1048]

Yet, as ethnographers including Elizabeth Bernstein and Annegret Staiger have examined, sexualised imagery visible in the cityscape need not have direct or liberalising consequences for the management of commercial sex. Both have identified the coexistence of images of scantily-clad female bodies in the same spaces from which women are forcibly removed for soliciting.[1049] Continued complaints by residents and business people, as well as crackdowns on street prostitution, evident in Hamburg, Cologne and West Berlin throughout the period, support their observations.[1050]

In the late 1970s, St. Georg became the target of the city's campaigns of urban 'revitalisation' and redevelopment. Hamburg's building authority saw St. Georg as a priority, due to the congestion problems and the density of unmodernised housing.[1051] Yet the residents were also deemed a particular concern, with an ageing population, a quarter of residents not German citizens and more than 400 prostitutes. Despite being in a *Sperrbezirk* and despite the proximity of nearby St. Pauli, St. Georg had remained a hub for more informal commercial sex offerings, in particular street-based work. It was also becoming a prominent centre for drug-related commercial sex.[1052]

In the context of city attempts to 'revitalise' the district, women selling sex once again attracted particular attention. The harsher policing of transactional sex in the area targeted both prostitutes and their clients, who were required to provide their personal details and witness statements. Specific police actions—against street prostitution as well as raids of bars and hotels—targeted this 'repugnant state of affairs', in the words of Hubert Jungesblut (*Bezirksamt* director). Police chief Werner Giese tellingly argued that district redevelopment should not be restricted to buildings alone.[1053]

[1047] Tschocke/Reiser, *Domenica*, 14.
[1048] Herzog, *Sex after Fascism*, 145.
[1049] Bernstein, *Temporarily Yours*, 23; Staiger, *Legalized Prostitution* Chapter 1.
[1050] 'Kölns heimliches Sex-Revier', *EXPRESS*, 01.09.1973; Christiane Howe, Gerhard Haug and Rolf Hemmerich, *Reise durch ein Viertel - 30 Menschen erzählen: Nachbarschaft und Straßenprostitution - wie geht das?* (Berlin, 2012), 14–15; Complaint letters in: Best-7704-Acc-168, HAStK.
[1051] '"Eine schlechte Adresse hat auch ihre Reize"', *Der Spiegel*, 12.11.1978.
[1052] Isabell Tiede, *Mädchenprostitution* (Reinbek/Berlin, 1997).
[1053] '"Eine schlechte Adresse"'.

Loud traffic, street prostitution and construction sites kept the rents low, but were increasingly at odds with the new luxury hotels and office buildings in the area. In 1978, *Der Spiegel* reported on the redevelopment underway in Hamburg's St. Georg district under the heading 'A bad address also has its charms'. The article described St. Georg as Hamburg's most colourful quarter, with numerous groups at odds in shaping the district's character. For *Der Spiegel,* St. Georg was typical of German cities, where cars, prostitutes and other 'negative groups', such as foreigners and the elderly, faced expulsion from the district.[1054]

St. Georg illustrates the interplay of processes of gentrification and the management of commercial sex in the city. Geographers, ethnographers and historians have explored how the presence of commercial sex in city space is managed to protect property rights or prices in 'respectable neighbourhoods'.[1055] With St. Georg's central location, as a district undergoing processes of urban renewal, the policing of street prostitution functioned as a central element of Hamburg's attempt to make St. Georg respectable, which reached beyond those selling sex to determine the demographics of access to the district itself. Therefore, many St. Georg residents viewed the displacement of prostitution and the consequences for the district itself with concern. The group 'Save St. Georg!' looked to counter the city's modernisation plans, to keep it accessible to current residents.[1056] St. Georg illustrates the enduring role of commercial sex and its visibility as a subject of negotiation between interest groups in the city. In the context of wider gentrification processes, similar disputes played out in cities across West Germany in the years that followed.[1057]

Conclusions

Although the provisions of the 1953 Law on Combatting Venereal Diseases (GBG) had placed the sale of sex as a public health issue, when it came to the management of women selling sex in the West German city, local authorities, police departments and city residents often interpreted their presence primarily as a public order concern.

The *Sperrbezirke* in Hamburg and Cologne in 1961 cemented the interpretation of commercial sex as disruptive to public order. In Cologne, this association was clearest, as the text of the regulation focussed on visible, primarily street-based,

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[1054] Ibid.

[1055] See: Hubbard, 'Cleansing the Metropolis'; Bernstein, *Temporarily Yours*; Hemphill, *Bawdy City*; Walkowitz, 'Feminism and the Politics of Prostitution'.

[1056] '"Eine schlechte Adresse"'.

[1057] Künkel, *Sex, Drugs & Control*; Löw/Ruhne, 'Domesticating Prostitution'.

prostitution. Solicitation in bars or hotels, deemed less perceptible, remained outside of its remit. Although Hamburg's first *Sperrbezirk* regulation differed from Cologne's, the policing of St. Georg in practice concentrated on these same visible elements of the sex industry. The initial installation of St. Pauli as a de facto tolerance zone illustrates a more piecemeal approach by Hamburg authorities both eager not to lose the revenue generated by tourism and dubious of such a regulation's effectiveness in the area. However, by late 1970, Hamburg's new *Sperrbezirk* both stretched to the harbour and explicitly stated its focus on visible transactional sex. In West Berlin, although the idea of a *Sperrbezirk* was repeatedly raised, the topography of the city was deemed incompatible, with authorities and police resorting instead to other methods to control sex in the city.

Commercial sex and public order stood in a complicated relationship. Local authorities and police departments largely found visible transactional sex disruptive—despite the sale of sex remaining legal throughout the period—and street prostitution was regularly targeted as a challenge to public order. Both Hamburg and Cologne saw older brothel streets increasingly concealed or disbanded, their central location at odds with the changing cities. In Cologne, the court decisions which upheld the closure of the Im Stavenhof and Kleine Brinkgasse houses used the protection of the bourgeois institutions of marriage and the family enshrined in West German Basic Law to justify the eviction of women who sold sex. These values were supposedly strengthened by removing central, visible locations for transactional sex, at the same time as the city permitted and encouraged the establishment of a new Eros-Center spatially removed from the city centre.

The sanctioning of large brothel style houses provides an interesting example of contradictions inherent in the management of commercial sex. Condoned by local authorities across the country, if not explicitly in federal law, Eros-Centers promised updated and modern locations for transactional sex in a changing West Germany. At the same time, however, local authorities hoped they could reduce the visibility of commercial sex in the city. This focus was explicit in Cologne, where the *Eros-Center* was located outside of the *Sperrbezirk* and city centre. In this, developments in West Germany foreshadowed the focus of contemporary scholarship on tolerance zones and pushing commercial sex to the margins.[1058] Elizabeth Bernstein describes how street

[1058] See: Howell et al., 'Managed Zones for Sex Workers'; Hubbard/Sanders, 'Making Space for Sex Work'.

prostitution in 1990s San Francisco was targeted by police, while larger commercialised sexual services, or less visible operations outside of the centre, were mostly tolerated, which she sees as part of the wider reallocation of urban space.[1059]

The Hamburg and Cologne Eros-Centers were opened through the direct collaboration of city authorities and private investors. The privatisation of large-scale 'prostitute residences' allowed for the reestablishment of brothels in all but name, less conspicuous and outside of the city's direct responsibility, with the threat of a potential procurement charge ensuring a level of control and cooperation with health offices and police. However, it also brought new powerful profit-oriented voices into the discussion on commercial sex in the city. The managers of Hamburg's *Palais d'Amour* and Cologne's *Eros-Center* explicitly pushed the public order narrative to make demands of city authorities. Once the houses were opened, managers began demanding lenience towards them—be it alcohol licences or freedom from health office registration—alongside harsher policing of street prostitution and unlicensed brothels.

Selling sex on the street became more contentious, precisely because of local regulations and policing which treated the sale and purchase of sex as public order concerns. New measures were accompanied by intensified police patrols and harsher punishments and women who sold sex on the street in in Hamburg and Cologne were increasingly the subject of police intervention, backed by resident outrages. Punishments included fines, imprisonment or confinement in a workhouse and, with each arrest, women who sold sex faced longer and harsher sentences. Those who moved to an Eros-Center, by contrast, saw their earnings hit by hidden costs and increased direct competition.

Although developments in Hamburg and Cologne followed similar patterns, mirrored in various forms across West Germany, West Berlin repeatedly showed itself to be an outlier in these matters. Here, the policing of commercial sex in public decreased after 1958, despite similar understandings of prostitution as an issue of public order amongst city administrators and local politicians, and women selling sex remained dispersed across the city space. Women who sold sex in Berlin in the 1960s and 1970s, not deemed a police priority, were less likely than their West German counterparts to face arrest for on-street solicitation.

The treatment of prostitution as a public order concern becomes particularly interesting when viewed in conjunction with the increasing commercialisation and

[1059] Bernstein, *Temporarily Yours*, 38.

acceptance of sex and sexuality in West Germany. Hamburg's vice police, for instance, featured in the national press for targeting women whose outfits did not differ greatly from clothing worn by teenagers. All three cities saw crackdowns on street prostitution alongside a heightened presence of sexualised imagery in public space. Hamburg's St. Pauli, and, to a lesser extent, Cologne's Eros-Center functioned as tourist attractions. With an increasing focus on the individual consumer in West Germany's capitalist society, and the greater acceptance of erotic consumption as part of this, developments in the city's sex industries fed into the narrative of the modern sexual consumer. Although this could perhaps include clients of the Eros-Centers, it did not apply to women who sold sex within them, whose presence outside of these confines continued to be seen as disruptive. City residents, local businesspeople, politicians and religious figures repeatedly mobilised narratives of the prostitute as a threat to public order in city space. Citizen protests, exemplified by the school strike in St. Pauli, were instrumental in the passage or extension of *Sperrbezirk* regulations, and policing was similarly responsive to action and complaints from city residents.

6. *Epilogue*: After 1980

In 1981, sex guide *Der Strich* sold its readers the promise of a varied and thriving West German sex industry. Commercial sex, it suggested, proved particularly lucrative, and prices for paid sex continued to rise despite an increased supply.[1060] Soon, however, this optimistic outlook was threatened. In May 1982, news magazine *Der Spiegel* published an article entitled 'Terror from Abroad', the first of many preoccupied with the new mysterious illness—AIDS.[1061] In contrast to the growth the guide had announced, the 1980s saw demand and prices for commercial sex drop.[1062] In the words of one anonymous woman, 'our trade is the only one in Germany that has become cheaper'.[1063] Together, the AIDS crisis, the contemporaneous 'heroin wave' and a revived media preoccupation with trafficking from the 'Third World' drastically reshaped West Germany's market for commercial sex over the following decade, *Der Strich*'s promise proving short-lived.

The pace and intensity with which the defining premises and circumstances of previous years were challenged suggest that, in the management of commercial sex in West Germany, the 1980s functioned as a caesura. Ethnographic studies of German sex work feature women who look back to the golden years of the 1970s 'when [they] worked less, had more control over their bodies and their clients, earned more, and, with or without a *Zuhälter* [pimp], often lived a fast and fancy lifestyle'.[1064] Rather than examine the wide-ranging developments of the 1980s and beyond in their entirety, this chapter draws out the most significant interventions in the management of commercial sex in West Germany, pointing to continuities and ruptures. This includes both policy developments, but also the impact of prostitute activism and wider processes of urban renewal. I assess how market and structuring premises were transformed in the 1980s, before drawing links to more recent developments in the regulation of sex work in Germany.

[1060] *Der Strich*, 5–6.
[1061] James W. Jones, 'Discourses on and of AIDS in West Germany, 1986-1990', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 2/3 (1992), 441.
[1062] 'Ruhe im Puff', *Der Spiegel*, 20.12.1987.
[1063] Unattributed quote in Schäfke, *Das neue Köln*, 526.
[1064] Staiger, *Legalized Prostitution*, 68.

Drugs and the 'heroin wave'

The origins of one of the central developments of the 1980s—the expansion of the so-called 'heroin wave' and the association of commercial sex with illegal drug use— can be traced back into the 1970s. My case studies include two of the most significant urban hubs for the West German sex industry, Hamburg, and West Berlin, which were both also centres of the West German drug trade and saw the effects of heroin use before it spread to the rest of the FRG. This is unsurprising considering that centres for commercial sex often overlap and interlink with centres for drug use and distribution. Measures which criminalise prostitution, and therefore encourage the reliance on third parties and a criminal 'underworld', have been found to cause increased linkages between these realms.[1065]

Even if the 'heroin wave' was perhaps slower to arrive in the rest of West Germany—with the exception of Frankfurt—the media's obsession with illegal drug use was evident in the 1970s, at the latest when *Der Spiegel* named West Berlin 'the capital city of *Fixer*' in 1978.[1066] The term *Fixer,* impolite slang for drug addicts mostly used in connection with heroin, came to dominate media coverage of drug use in the years to come. By the time the popular book *Wir Kinder vom Bahnhof Zoo,* initially serialised in *Stern* magazine, was released as a film in 1981, West German audiences were familiar with tales of teens taking heroin and selling sex to fund their addiction.

The tabloid press, as Stephens has identified, revelled in three types of drug stories: tales of young Germans overdosing, of celebrities caught with illegal substances, and of police arresting (often foreign) smugglers.[1067] This media preoccupation with drug use reached new heights in the early 1980s, with images of drug-related deaths commonly found in glossy news magazines. Articles typically depicted the *Fixer* as physically weak, undernourished, and unkempt. Often, they centred in on the *Fixer* as prostitute, both male and female, typically underage.[1068] Although the *Fixers* featured in magazines were usually white German nationals, coverage of the 'heroin wave' placed the blame on foreign smugglers, exemplified by the 1977 *Der Spiegel* article 'Heroin, the Turks are coming'. The article drew on and exacerbated anti-Turkish racism, attributing the West German drug trade to Turkish men—including 'guest workers'—and labelling the drug itself 'the Turkish

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[1065] Laite, *Common Prostitutes*, 206.
[1066] 'Hauptstadt der Fixer', *Der Spiegel*, 01.01.1978.
[1067] Stephens, *Germans on Drugs*, 114.
[1068] '"Französisch 50, Verkehr 60"', *Der Spiegel*, 29.10.1989.

substance'.[1069] Depictions of *Fixer* prostitutes often included references to their foreign, often specifically Turkish, clients.[1070] These links, along with the longer history of xenophobia against 'guest workers', should be seen in the context of West Germany's economic crisis post-1973 and the influx of foreign workers in the early 1970s, coinciding with the decision to end the labour recruitment agreements. 'The public conception of Turkish and Iranian residents as drug dealers', writes Stephens, 'had less to do with the number of individuals involved in the trade than it did with a larger climate of xenophobia and the general fear of being overrun with foreigners'.[1071]

Contemporary reports repeatedly emphasised a divide between *Fixers* and professional prostitutes, suggesting that drug users broke generally accepted rules on prices and risks, such as agreeing to sex without a condom. Such statements appear both in contemporary news coverage but also in activist statements, as expressed by the group Hydra in Berlin. Consequently, the *Fixer* scene was often spatially separated. In West Berlin it was mostly associated with the station Zoologischer Garten and the Kurfürstendamm. More generally, those who sold sex to fund a drug addiction primarily did so on the street or in or around train stations, also the case in Hamburg's St. Georg and Cologne. This offered a flexibility that other forms of commercial sex did not and placed fewer constraints or demands of regularity on their labour.[1072]

The association of heroin use with prostitution, although evident by the late 1970s, took hold in the 1980s. By 1997 Hamburg social worker Isabell Tiede estimated that 90% of minors selling sex in St. Georg were addicted to illegal drugs.[1073] Teenagers selling sex, and concerns about drug-using teens more generally, gradually provoked local social care responses from the mid-1980s onwards. The most notable example is Tiede's own *Café Sperrgebiet,* founded in 1985, intended as a space for underage prostitutes to relax, eat, or pick up condoms.[1074] Tiede later described the struggles of setting it up:

> no one really wanted to believe that minors were prostituting themselves. We didn't get any figures, neither from the police nor from the youth welfare office. Only after two years of work did we have an overview and could go public with concrete numbers.[1075]

[1069] 'Heroin: Die Türken kommen', *Der Spiegel,* 20.11.1977.
[1070] On German anti-Turkish racism: Chin, *The Guest Worker Question*. For anti-Turkish racism and the drug trade, see: Stephens, *Germans on Drugs*, 112–16.
[1071] Ibid., 114.
[1072] Heying, *Huren in Bewegung*, 205.
[1073] Tiede, *Mädchenprostitution*, 11.
[1074] '"Französisch 50, Verkehr 60"'.
[1075] Tiede, *Mädchenprostitution*, 11–12.

Her descriptions suggest that, despite lively media coverage, prostitution by minors was at first not deemed a policy problem, disregarding a longer German history of viewing the presence of prostitution as a threat to youth protection. Tiede was able to found *Café Sperrgebiet* with help of a private donation, only later receiving state financing. Social work interventions thus also shaped how commercial sex was understood both by the public and by policymakers.[1076]

Tiede explicitly did not want *Café Sperrgebiet* to work with police.[1077] She envisaged it as a safe space, where the women and girls would not have to hide aspects of their lives, emphasising 'we don't keep any records'.[1078] It therefore marked a drastic change from earlier welfare interventions, in particular the reformatories. Other organisations set up by social workers around this time, such as St.Pauli's *Kaffeeklappe* for adult prostitutes or West Berlin group *Hydra* expressed similar intentions.[1079] Yet, whilst they signify a marked change from the care offices (*Pflegeämter*) and reformatories of earlier periods, this development was not universal, as local politicians and social workers demanded a return to more coercive measures.[1080] Similarly, when politicians and administrators in Hamburg pioneered accepting rather than abstinence-oriented drug policy work in the late 1980s, these developments were contested.[1081] Although Hamburg had abolished its reformatories in the mid-1980s, CDU party members soon demanded to bring them back to deal with underage prostitution.[1082] Elsewhere in the FRG, changes happened at a slower pace.

Both in West Germany and beyond its borders, the 'heroin wave' changed the perception, policing and experiences of commercial sex in the last decades of the twentieth century. Heroin addiction became a common trope and reason for selling sex, enmeshed with popular identities of prostitutes 'constructed through discourses of pollution and defilement'.[1083] With the equation of 'prostitutes' with 'heroin addicts' came the insistence of certain attributes, including irresponsibility and unpredictability.

[1076] See also historiography on the *Deutsche AIDS-Hilfe*: Henning Tümmers, *AIDS. Autopsie einer Bedrohung im geteilten Deutschland* (Göttingen, 2017); Peter-Paul Bänziger, 'Vom Seuchen- zum Präventionskörper? Aids und Körperpolitik in der BRD und der Schweiz in den 1980er Jahren', *Body Politics*, 2/3 (2014), 179–214.
[1077] 'Unsere Botschaft ist nicht: Kehret um!', *taz*, 26.07.1986.
[1078] Tiede, *Mädchenprostitution*, 16.
[1079] Heying, *Huren in Bewegung*, 58-60.
[1080] '"Wir sind doch hier kein Zoo"', *Der Spiegel*, 03.09.1989.
[1081] Künkel, *Sex, Drugs & Control*, 175.
[1082] Almut Gross and Anke Mohnert, 'Von der Unzüchigen zur Unsichtbaren', in *Sexarbeit*, ed. von Dücker/Hamburg Museum der Arbeit, 147; Tiede, *Mädchenprostitution*, 15.
[1083] Hubbard/Sanders, 'Making Space for Sex Work', 79.

In Germany, public administrators to this day continue to justify their treatment of sex workers with the argument that they are 'needy, chaotic, irresponsible (usually in conjunction with drug use)'. Drug-using sex workers are deemed a particular problem, their 'irrational' behaviour posing a problem for police.[1084]

HIV/AIDS

Following, but soon intertwined with the concerns about the 'heroin wave', was the perceived threat from AIDS. Initially, the media associated AIDS primarily with gay men, with *Der Spiegel* referring to it as the 'homosexual plague' (*Homosexuellen-Seuche*) in 1983.[1085] Soon, however, coverage began to take up the themes of older VD panics and, by 1987, prostitutes were depicted both in media and politics as a main risk group.[1086]

The association of AIDS with addicts and prostitutes stoked fears that these groups represented the virus' entry to the general population.[1087] This trope significantly preceded the AIDS crisis; Judith Walkowitz has identified how prostitutes in Victorian England were seen as the conduit of infections (both literal and figurative) to the respectable population.[1088] Despite the continued health office registration and testing of women who sold sex, general fears of VD had largely subsided in West Germany before AIDS.[1089] Yet with AIDS constructed in the German media as a sexually transmitted disease (particularly in the early years), older narratives and associations quickly resurfaced.[1090]

Peter-Paul Bänziger has determined two main phases in the history of AIDS prevention in West Germany. The first phase, he argues, saw AIDS constructed as the 'other': of homosexuals, foreigners, prostitutes and drug addicts. The second phase, dating from around 1985, saw the focus of AIDS prevention programmes gradually shift from 'risk groups' to 'risk behaviour', partly due to activism by those most affected.[1091] This shift between the phases was, according to Bänziger, slow and not absolute, yet

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[1084] Rebecca Pates, 'Liberal Laws Juxtaposed with Rigid Control: An Analysis of the Logics of Governing Sex Work in Germany', *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 9/3 (2012), 212–22.
[1085] 'Aids: "Eine Epidemie, die erst beginnt"', *Der Spiegel*, 05.06.1983.
[1086] Bänziger, 'Vom Seuchen- zum Präventionskörper?', 182.
[1087] Jones, 'Discourses', 445.
[1088] Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society*, 4.
[1089] Bänziger, 'Vom Seuchen- zum Präventionskörper?', 179.
[1090] Magdalena Beljan, '"Unlust bei der Lust"? Aids, HIV & Sexualität in der BRD', in *Sexuelle Revolution?*, ed. Bänziger and others, 324.
[1091] Bänziger, 'Vom Seuchen- zum Präventionskörper?', 179–214.

saw AIDS prevention measures consider the transmission risks of certain practices and advocate 'safer sex' practices.[1092]

When the first HIV tests entered the market in 1984, they prompted discussions about the level and limits of state intervention, specifically whether use should be made of the 1961 Federal Epidemics Law. This law contained provisions for the mandatory reporting of infections or work bans for infected individuals. Parliament also discussed the possibility of mass screenings for the general population, or the forced testing of certain risk groups.[1093] In November 1986, however, the West German parliament approved a resolution which set out a more liberal AIDS policy, resting on personal responsibility and cooperation rather than forced measures. Historian Henning Tümmers has examined a range of factors which led to this decision, notably the long shadow of the Nazi past, which deterred politicians and administrators from advocating for the forced testing of gay men.[1094] In 1987 health minister Rita Süssmuth argued that 'in the years 1933 to 1945, a regime of terror prevailed that discriminated and murdered. We should do everything to prevent comparable events'.[1095] Yet across much of West Germany, women who sold sex continued to be subject to compulsory VD testing. Health office clinic records from Cologne also indicate that from around 1985, HIV tests were included as part of the registration of women who sold sex.[1096] In 1987, registered women in Hamburg were reportedly tested for HIV every four weeks.[1097] In 1990, in a sample of 90 health offices, at least 18 respondents from four federal states declared compulsory HIV tests to be part of health office registration.[1098]

Unlike the federal government's more liberal route, the state of Bavaria implemented decidedly restrictive measures. Bavarian Secretary of State Peter Gauweiler was at the forefront of attempts to implement a catalogue of measures against 'risk groups', including a 'duty to report' infection and forced tests.[1099] In February 1987, the Bavarian cabinet introduced measures, including the forced testing of women

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[1092] Ibid., 197.
[1093] Henning Tümmers, 'Aidspolitik: Bonn und der Umgang mit einer neuen Bedrohung', *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, 52 (2012), 238.
[1094] Ibid., 239.
[1095] Rita Süssmuth, *AIDS: Wege aus der Angst* (Hamburg, 1987), 95.
[1096] Appointment cards, Acc-1647-A14, HAStK.
[1097] Erich Wiedemann, 'Sex wie bei Muttern gibt es nur am Spotmarkt', *Der Spiegel*, 22.03.1987.
[1098] Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 120.
[1099] Jones, 'Discourses', 443; 'Aids - "Das wird schlimmer als Tschernobyl"', *Der Spiegel*, 23.02.1987.

who sold sex.[1100] Once implemented, however, these tests indicated that their classification as separate risk group was misleading. Out of around 500 prostitutes tested in Nuremberg, and of 300 tests in Augsburg, not one indicated the presence of HIV. Of the 800 tests of registered prostitutes in Munich, only one tested positive.[1101] Bavaria's approach was criticised in the press, with *Spiegel* accusing politicians of wanting to create a totalitarian 'Aids-State'. Thus, despite Bavaria's more restrictive approach, Bänziger sees this as evidence that the narrative of 'risk behaviours', rather than 'risk groups' was gaining traction.[1102]

In decided contrast to the stricter measures evident in Bavaria, Hamburg's AIDS policies, known in retrospect as the 'Hamburg line', were noticeably more liberal. Here, Tümmers has identified a relative consensus from the mid-1980s that comprehensive state interventions, including restrictive measures in the fight against AIDS, would be rejected. Already in December 1984, the Hamburg senate decided against the mandatory reporting of infection. [1103] Hamburg also supported the work of self-help groups early on, resulting in a new level of cooperation between state and non-state actors in the field of public health.[1104] The city-state's more liberal AIDS policies directly affected the long-standing system of health office registration, with Hamburg making regular VD testing for women who sold sex voluntary in the mid-1980s.[1105]

Hamburg also refrained from imposing work bans for prostitutes, arguing that HIV tests did not yet offer absolute safety and prostitutes could become infected by the next client immediately after testing. Instead, they advocated for the promotion of safer sex. Hamburg was therefore less restrictive than the Conference of Health Ministers. In 1987 the Conference published a resolution on AIDS, according to which work bans for prostitutes should be imposed, in combination with 'exiting' programmes.[1106] West Berlin similarly focussed on information and voluntary participation over state

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[1100] Jones, 'Discourses', 441.

[1101] Heying, *Huren in Bewegung*, 198. In 1989, Hamburg's Senate stated that female prostitutes made up only 1% of Hamburg's AIDS patients: Henning Tümmers, '"Heaven can wait": Reaktionen auf die Aids-Bedrohung in Hamburg', in *Jahresbericht der FZH 2011* (Hamburg, 2012), 13–30. See similar results of the 1987 HIV tests at Berlin *Beratungsstellen*: 'Bericht über Maßnahmen gegen die Ausbreitung von AIDS', 13, B-Rep-213-1912/2, LAB.

[1102] Bänziger, 'Vom Seuchen- zum Präventionskörper?', 199.

[1103] Tümmers, 'Heaven can wait', 20–22.

[1104] Ibid., 13–30.

[1105] Künkel, *Sex, Drugs & Control*, 217.

[1106] Tümmers, 'Heaven can wait', 23.

intervention, yet media coverage of HIV/AIDS often remained alarmist.[1107] In the press, Hamburg's measures were presented as a serious danger in the context of HIV/AIDS:

> It is up to them whether they find out that they have been infected by some john from the Far East, and whether they pass the disease on to their next customer. Coercion has certainly never been a good thing—but who can understand why controls are abolished in Hamburg in view of the worldwide Aids threat.[1108]

While Hamburg's ZB made the move to voluntary registration, numerous continuities in the treatment of women who sold sex remained. Correspondence between health offices illustrates that use of the term 'hwG' remained widespread, whilst patient files from Cologne document the use of the term 'professional debauchery' (*Gewerbsunzucht*) to refer to commercial sex as late as 1985, over ten years after the term's removal from the criminal code.[1109] West Germans continued to respond negatively to attempts by health offices to liberalise the registration of women who sold sex, and such measures rarely garnered the support of local politicians.[1110] Although the 1980s saw a general reduction in the use of forced measures at local health offices, significant regional variation remained.[1111] Health offices in Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg proved particularly reluctant to cease the mandatory VD exams for women who sold sex.[1112] Rather than representing the Federal Republic as a whole, liberalising developments in Hamburg and Berlin appear instead out of step with the rest of West Germany.[1113]

The move to voluntary registration in Hamburg and Berlin reveals the first decisive shift in health office registration since its re-introduction with the 1953 GBG. Although the post-war VD epidemic had subsided and penicillin had substantially minimised ostensible public health reasons for the registration and mandatory testing of hwG-persons, the coercive regulatory system had remained in place for decades. Indeed, downgraded largely to a problem of bureaucracy, health office registration took place unknown to many West Germans. The AIDS epidemic, by reigniting the issues of infection pathways and refocussing questions on forced testing and registration led the

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[1107] 'Zappenduster, Ende', *Der Spiegel*.
[1108] Rüdiger Straub, 'Hamburg: Kein Zwangstest mehr für Prostituierte', *BILD Hamburg,* 10.06.1987. On public reactions to liberalising measures, see: Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 138.
[1109] See: Acc-1647-A14, HAStK.
[1110] Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 138.
[1111] Ibid., 128.
[1112] 'Geprüftes Frischfleisch'.
[1113] Bremen also showed liberalising tendencies: Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 137.

city-states of Hamburg and West Berlin to follow new mitigation strategies.[1114] These strategies, and the willingness to foreground voluntary approaches, impacted also the local-level implementation of the GBG. And yet, whilst these changes were significant, they did not reach across West Germany. Regular health check-ups remain a mandatory prerequisite for legal sex work in Germany today.

Migration and 'trafficking'

In the late 1950s and into the 1960s, the majority of women registered in the brothel streets of Hamburg and Cologne were German nationals, often from the local area. Increased migration to West Germany during the 1960s and 1970s—primarily a result of 'guest worker' labour agreements—also impacted the demographics of women selling sex in the cities. As the cities grew more diverse, so did the sites of sexual labour. Improved transportation and communication networks meant that this trend continued over the 1980s and beyond.[1115]

In the 1980s, 'trafficking', which been noticeably absent from discussions on prostitution, resurfaced as a central concern, drawing on a longer history of the trafficking framework, evident both on an institutional and discourse level, in the context of 'white slavery', abolitionism and the 1949 UN convention.[1116] More directly, influential discussions from the 1970s, which centred around the question of whether prostitutes have human rights or whether prostitution is a human rights violation, revived concerns of trafficking, particularly in the face of increased migrant prostitution and the involvement of foreign nationals as third parties in local sex industries.[1117] Notable participants who argued the latter position include Kathleen Barry in the US, as well as Alice Schwarzer and EMMA magazine in Germany. Vocal opponents of this position included prostitute organisations COYOTE in the US and the English Collective of Prostitutes, as well as the Wages for Housework movements.[1118] These

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[1114] Ibid., 136.

[1115] Outshoorn, 'The Political Debates', 141; Heying, *Huren in Bewegung*, 162.

[1116] See; Attwood, 'Stopping the Traffic', 325–50; König, *Der Staat als Zuhälter*; Julia Laite, 'The Association for Moral and Social Hygiene: Abolitionism and Prostitution Law in Britain (1915-1959)', *Women's History Review*, 17 (2008), 207–23; Pliley, *Policing Sexuality*.

[1117] See: Sonja Dolinsek, 'Haben Prostituierte Menschenrechte oder ist Prostitution eine Menschenrechtsverletzung? Transnationale Kontroversen im 20. Jahrhundert', in *Menschenrechte und Geschlecht im 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Roman Birke and Carola Sachse, 185–206.

[1118] Wages for Housework in the UK was closely linked to prostitute activism, in particular the ECP: Walkowitz, 'Feminism and the Politics of Prostitution', 12. On the German Wages for Housework movemen: Kerstin Wolff, 'Hausarbeit als Nebenwiderspruch? Die

discussions took place in the context of increased globalisation, both in the context of heightened migration to Europe but also against growing sex tourism industry from West Germany to 'third world' countries. Members of the West German women's movement espoused the belief that as women challenged the patriarchal order and stood up for their rights, men now looked overseas for 'submissive' women, often furthering systems of sexual slavery and trafficking.[1119] Newspapers and magazines contributed with an outpouring of articles on forced prostitution in the 'Third World', sex tourism and trafficking, associating commercial sex both at home and abroad with coercion and force, whilst civil society actors took up the cause of anti-trafficking in West Germany.[1120]

The renewed focus on 'trafficking' in the 1980s had real consequences for visas and immigration. In 1983, immigration papers first used the justification 'Combating trafficking of women and girls from Southeast Asia', whilst terminology shifted from 'wishing to engage in prostitution' to 'being led to prostitution'.[1121] Yet, from the early 1980s onwards, these narratives were increasingly applied only to non-European migrant women, opening up a divide between categories of migrants. The focus on non-European migrants in trafficking investigations can be traced back to the case of two French migrant women which reached the European Court of Justice. The court found that EEC migrants could travel to other EEC countries to sell sex without being deported. After this ruling, West German efforts focussed on non-European migrants (although EEC and later EU migrants *convicted* on prostitution *offences* could be deported).[1122] Sonja Dolinsek finds a liberalisation in migration possibilities for prostitutes from EEC countries following this ruling, whilst restrictions and controls on migration from other countries, especially from South East Asia and Latin America, were heightened.[1123]

These shifts were significant both in the demographics of *who* sold sex and *how* commercial sex was understood by the public and policy makers. The market of sexual labour in the 1980s was in a process of transformation, later strengthened by the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989, the demise of communism, and the expansion of the EU. New

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internationale "Lohn für Hausarbeit"-Debatte der 1970er Jahre in der Bundesrepublik', *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 2020 <https://www.bpb.de/shop/zeitschriften/apuz/care-arbeit-2020/317859/hausarbeit-als-nebenwiderspruch/> [accessed 21.03.2022].

[1119] Ilse Lenz, 'Prostitutionstourismus in Asien', A-Rep-400-Berlin-2.9a-21, FFBiZ.

[1120] See: A-Rep-400-Berlin-2.9A-21, FFBiZ.

[1121] Dolinsek, 'Gehandelte Frau?', 66–73.

[1122] This remained in place until January 2016: Künkel, *Sex, Drugs & Control*, 169.

[1123] Dolinsek, 'Gehandelte Frau?', 70–71.

cohorts of women selling sex brought separate concerns, whilst additional language barriers have resulted in restricted access to state services for some women who sell sex.[1124]

Despite a well-documented global history of 'trafficking' or 'white slavery' panics, these associations had largely lain dormant in West Germany over the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s.[1125] Their re-emergence, and particularly the vehemence with which they soon dominated the public discussion of commercial sex marks a significant change to the previous years. By the mid-1980s, 'trafficking' was back on the agenda of supra-national institutions, and of West German policy-makers.[1126]

Changing cities

Whilst the economic crisis post-1973 and rising levels of unemployment had already restricted the purchasing power of West Germans, the so-called '*Aidsfurcht*' (AIDS fear) saw the demand for commercial sex in West Germany reduce drastically and sexual labour become a less lucrative enterprise.[1127] St. Pauli was particularly hit, as fears coincided with the district's growing reputation for organised crime and gun violence, the media documenting thrilling stories of 'pimp gangs' willing to resort to weapons to settle disputes.[1128] Technological advances also played a role; the modernisation of Hamburg's harbour, for instance, which saw shipping containers unloaded in under 24 hours, reduced a traditional cohort of potential clients—sailors with time to kill.[1129] This range of factors, and their drastic impact on the sexual labour market, served to reorganise the sexual landscape.

The economic decline of the sex industry was most noticeable in the Eros-Centers. *Stern* magazine reported in 1988 that 50-70% fewer clients visited Frankfurt's *Eros-Center* than in 1984, whilst only 400 women worked there, compared to 1,500 back in 1982.[1130] Similar changes were reported in Hamburg and Berlin. In 1987, a few weeks before its closure, news coverage reported only one-third of the 246 rooms in Hamburg's *Eros-Center* were taken. King of St. Pauli Willi Bartels declared 'it was a

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[1124] Künkel, *Sex, Drugs & Control*, 225.
[1125] Dolinsek, 'Kein Mädchenhandel mehr', 385–416. For an overview of the 'trafficking' historiography: Hetherington and Laite, 'Trafficking, a Useless Category?', 7–39.
[1126] Outshoorn, 'The Political Debates', 141.
[1127] Jan-Philipp Sendker, 'Sag mir, wo die Freier sind...', *Stern*, 11.02.1988.
[1128] Barth, Reeperbahn, 131, 140. For press coverage of the Pinzer case: 135-1-VI-1103, StHH.
[1129] Barth, Reeperbahn, 130.
[1130] Sendker, 'Sag mir, wo die Freier sind...'

mistake, that I built that thing'. [1131] Instead, the building on Hamburg's Reeperbahn was subsequently used to temporarily house asylum seekers.[1132] In Berlin, *Stundenhotels* (hourly hotels, typically used for prostitution) around Potsdamer Straße were used to house homeless people and asylum seekers.[1133]

Social workers also reported that a number of women left commercial sex, due to fear of contracting HIV or because of their reduced potential to make money.[1134] Some contemporaries blamed the competition of migrant women selling sex at lower prices.[1135] Yet despite assessments that women were leaving commercial sex, a number of factors made leaving the profession particularly difficult. These included: the ongoing exclusion of prostitutes from the system of social security, the continued stigma surrounding sexual labour which left women with unexplained gaps in their CVs, possible debts, alcohol or drug dependencies, or a lack of qualifications.[1136] Some surely turned to less visible sexual labour, such as call-girl, escort, or massage parlour work. At the same time, changing forms of sexual labour, such as peep show or phone sex lines—typically not deemed to be prostitution—offered the possibility to earn money without offering penetrative sex.[1137] Regardless of the reasons why, by the 1990s, contemporaries assessed that the numbers of women in street prostitution had become substantially less.[1138]

Tiede of Hamburg's *Café Sperrgebiet* argued that, for those that remained, life in St. Georg got harder and, consequently, there was less solidarity between sex workers.[1139] Some third-party profiteers found that underage prostitution could prove more lucrative, whilst many combined their work with involvement in the drug trade, gambling or other more legitimate ventures, becoming bar or club owners.[1140] General

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[1131] 'Kampf um die Reeperbahn', *Der Spiegel,* 08.12.1997, 88.
[1132] Künkel, *Sex, Drugs & Control*, 196.
[1133] Sendker, 'Sag mir, wo die Freier sind...'
[1134] Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 237.
[1135] Ibid., 196.
[1136] Ibid., 237–39.
[1137] Hydra members concluded 'that although the work of the women in the peep shows is not direct prostitution, it has a lot to do with our work'; 'thema: peep show', *Hydra Nachtexpress*, July 1982, 7-10. On regional variations in the management of peep shows: 'Offene Tür', *Der Spiegel*, 26.06.1983. On phone sex lines: 'Muttispiel verklemmt', *Der Spiegel*, 27.08.1989.
[1138] Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 119.
[1139] Tiede, *Mädchenprostitution*, 52. Also: Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 194.
[1140] Tiede, *Mädchenprostitution*, 35, 49. Günther Braun, 'Im Milieu wird die Frau zum Handelsobjekt', *K-StA*, 03.09.1987. Staiger found a similar trend in Neuburg: Staiger, *Legalized Prostitution*, 62.

depictions of the West German sex industry frequently suggested that it was now primarily in foreign hands. By the mid-1980s, media depictions of commercial sex often looked longingly back to previous years, arguing that the old German scene of pimps and underworld figures was preferable to the 'violent foreigners', with the sex industry increasingly intertwined with the drugs trade and the presence of guns commonplace.[1141]

Whilst the sex industry was now often coded as inherently violent, city centres were again undergoing processes of urban renewal. This was often a combination of city interventions, such as the implementation of official renovation or modernisation measures, and private investments. From 1972 to 1999, for instance, the area in West Berlin around the Bülowbogen and Potsdamer Straße was officially declared a *Sanierungsgebiet* (renovation area), the proposed transformation to include the removal of hourly hotels and nightclubs from the district.[1142] From the mid-1980s, older buildings in Schöneberg, the traditional hub of the sex industry in Berlin, were demolished or renovated. Although official statements promised not to displace prostitution from its traditional location, the district's renovation in effect led to the loss of workplaces for many involved in commercial sex. Women who sold sex either moved to the streets around Bülowstraße, or to private apartments.[1143] In Hamburg, similar processes were underway, as the city advertised investment opportunities on the Reeperbahn whilst simultaneously implementing renovation measures in St. Pauli and particularly St. Georg. Frankfurt's famous *Bahnhofsviertel*—a hub for commercial sex in the city—was touted as an attractive site for office space, spilling out of the city's financial district.[1144]

These developments were the beginning of longer processes of urban renewal and gentrification. Geographer Jenny Künkel has lined the transformation of St. Georg from the 1980s onwards to the displacement of the area's poor or immigrant population, as she explores the displacement of street and visible indoor prostitution as a result of promoting St. Georg as a 'Gay Village' in the mid-2000s.[1145] Künkel also sees in St. Pauli's remarketing as a tourist destination from the 1990s, the 'marketing of

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[1141] A-Rep-400-Berlin-20.2.15-101, FFBiZ, in particular: 'Isolde und die Unterwelt', *Stern,* 23.12.1986.
[1142] Künkel, *Sex, Drugs & Control*, 113.
[1143] Howe/Haug/Hemmerich, *Reise durch ein Viertel*, 14–15.
[1144] Sendker, 'Sag mir, wo die Freier sind...'
[1145] Künkel, *Sex, Drugs & Control*, 171.

disreputability' once again take hold.[1146] She examines 'gentrification as a driver of repression', investigating how new inhabitants of the area use their (social) capital to demand police and city responses to the visible presence of sex work.[1147]

With Germany's high-rise brothels once again taken as representative of the country's attitude to commercial sex, it seems that the decline of the 1980s was not absolute. Nevertheless, the processes of exclusion and concealment in urban space have continued. Street prostitution has dwindled, and remains far from the dominant form of sexual labour. In this, Germany conforms to wider trends in Europe and North America, which have seen prostitution pushed from city streets, and instead move indoor and, with the rise of the internet, online.[1148]

The Whores' Movement

The above developments tell us about how commercial sex was shaped in this period by outside forces, including the media, politics and the legal sphere. Yet the 1980s also saw the foundation and growth of the West German *Hurenbewegung* or 'Whores' Movement' as locally-based groups of West German prostitutes built a network which stretched across the country and beyond borders. Members tackled topics and problems facing women who sold sex locally and globally, participating also in the International Whores' Convention and the International Committee for Prostitutes' Rights (ICPR).[1149]

The first of West Germany's autonomous prostitute projects began at the Berlin-Charlottenburg counselling centre, where women who sold sex were required to undergo regular tests. Social workers, together with lawyers, doctors, teachers, psychologists and one prostitute founded Hydra, the Association for the Promotion of the Professional and Cultural Education of Female Prostitutes. In July 1980, the association opened *Café Hydra* as a meeting point and headquarters and soon moved to a house in Potsdamer Straße. Within this period, the membership shifted, so that by late 1980 the majority of those involved in this association-turned-self-help group were women who sold sex. Hydra's members focussed on helping each other, through minimising risk, organising training and childcare. Berlin's Hydra would become one of the most important groupings in the emergent Whores' Movement.[1150]

[1146] Ibid., 197, 211.
[1147] Ibid., 182.
[1148] Bernstein, *Temporarily Yours*, 30, 164.
[1149] Heying, *Huren in Bewegung*, 107.
[1150] Ibid., 58–60.

Hydra's aim was to bring about greater societal acceptance of women who sold sex. To achieve this, the association aimed to both provide practical help to prostitutes, but also engaged in wider publicity work. One of the first steps was the publication of Hydra's *Nachtexpress* magazine. Early editions emphasised the need for solidarity amongst prostitutes, evident in the paper's sub-heading 'Newspaper for Bar, Brothel and Pavements'. It claimed to be 'independent, biased, immoral' in its approach, and argued against the capitalist labour system which it saw as reason for the 'enforced competition' between prostitutes. Hydra's *Nachtexpress* also looked to build bridges between different groups, with the increasing number of women who sold sex who could not speak German and with trans* prostitutes.[1151]

Over the course of the 1980s, other local groups were founded, including Frankfurt's *HWG – Huren wehren sich gemeinsam* (Whores fight back together) in 1984, the title a play on the term 'hwG'-persons. In 1985 local groups organised and held the first of the regular Whores' Congresses (*Hurenkongress*). In 1987 prostitutes started similar groups in Hamburg and Cologne.[1152] *Solidarität Hamburger Huren* (Hamburg Whores Solidarity) was founded after a colleague was murdered by a man who thought another prostitute had given him AIDS.[1153] As one member stated, 'we have to get a handle on the situation before we get slaughtered. Because one thing is clear: any one of us could have been that woman'.[1154]

Both locally and nationally, prostitute groups took on the topics of the day. This was clearest in their work on AIDS, with groups encouraging condom use, spreading information about transmission routes, and working with the *Deutsche AIDS-Hilfe*, the foremost AIDS organisation.[1155] In fact, with the prominent media association of prostitution with AIDS, groups such as Hydra could position themselves as experts, with members invited to discuss the topic, and outreach work funded under the guise of AIDS-prevention.[1156] Hydra used these resources to fund their exit programmes, which helped women access education programmes or job opportunities outside of sex work.[1157] In the Whores' Congresses, members discussed larger questions surrounding

[1151] Ibid., 58-60.
[1152] Ibid., 66.
[1153] Ibid., 197.
[1154] 20/07/2022 12:18:00
[1155] 'AIDS', *Hydra Nachtexpress*, Spring/Summer 1985, 39.
[1156] Heying, *Huren in Bewegung*, 198.
[1157] 'Zappenduster, Ende'.

HIV/AIDS, such as whether HIV positive women should be allowed to sell sex. In this question, members decided against a potential ban.[1158]

Campaigning around AIDS could offer an entryway to campaigning on other issues. As Pieke Biermann admitted in a 1988 letter:

> of course those highclass politicians, men like women, always misunderstand our work (systematically!) as one for the organising of pros getting out of prostitution. Ha ha. We let them and keep publishing our real politics. But, you know, you get money nowadays by a thing called AIDS… That sounds macabre, but for pros and the pros' movement AIDS does offer a big chance![1159]

Hydra, echoing demands made by US-based group COYOTE, repeatedly argued for a *Bockschein* or health office registration for clients. They campaigned that the ban on advertisements for commercial sex be lifted, arguing that it made it impossible to advertise for 'safe sex'. From 1988, Hydra began advertising 'safe sex' in the pages of *Nachtexpress*.[1160] *Hamburg Whores' Solidarity* and other groups made similar demands, arguing that it was typically clients rather than prostitutes who refused condoms.[1161] As the group *Kassandra* contended, registered prostitutes were typically well-informed about VD and condom use.[1162]

Members of the Whores' Movement were overwhelmingly white Germans who sold sex professionally and this demographic bias was evident in their work with drug-using and migrant prostitutes. Women who sold sex to fund their drug habit did not participate in the Whores' Movement in any significant number, and activists typically viewed them as drug addicts first and prostitutes second.[1163] Although activists did address them and, to an extent, tried to include their needs by encouraging them to work more safely, they repeatedly expressed biases and stereotypes.[1164] In a number of ways, the Whores' Movement demonstrated xenophobic sentiments. Members complained that migrant women did not integrate and blamed them for bringing prices down. At the 1989 Whores' Congress, participants commented that both migrants and '*Fixer*' did not go for regular VD checks, or take responsibility for their health. Nevertheless, the movement gradually addressed these divides. Hydra began publishing editions of the *Nachtexpress* in different languages to attract and include migrant sex workers and, in the early 1990s, the magazine featured them directly. When addressing reports on

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[1158] Heying, *Huren in Bewegung*, 199.
[1159] Biermann to Georgia, 14.12.1988, A-Rep-400-Berlin-29A-9, FFBiZ.
[1160] Heying, *Huren in Bewegung*, 201.
[1161] 'Steckbrief der Solidarität Hamburger Huren', 351-18-396, StHH.
[1162] Heying, *Huren in Bewegung*, 198.
[1163] Protocol 'Primärprävention', 15.10.1987, 9/180, A-Rep-400-Berlin-20.2.15-62, FFBiZ.
[1164] Heying, *Huren in Bewegung*, 206.

trafficking, members of the Whores' Movement argued that the blanket victimisation of migrants as victims of traffickers neither helped the women themselves, nor did it harm those who profited from them. They demanded a change to residency or visa requirements as an important way to combat exploitation in the sex industry. In the 1990s, members of the Whores' Movement also questioned the supposed divide between drug- and non-drug-users by bringing widespread cocaine use in brothels to attention.[1165]

Prostitute activists also argued against the image of pimps furthered by the West German media, pointing instead to parallels with marriage, including structures of dependency and violence, and argued that the same capitalist and patriarchal structures shaped both relationships. They related pimping both to the conditions of selling sex and to the stigma and treatment of prostitutes more generally. With streetwalkers vulnerable to theft and assaults, pushed to the peripheries and to darker, less populated streets, activists argued that the men who others called 'pimps' could offer necessary protection. Activists also argued that choosing a male protector was a logical consequence of prostitutes being told that they were worth less, with pimps often amongst the only men happy to openly date a prostitute and thus to offer a relationship that at least resembled the bourgeois ideal. In their demands, activists tackled the criminal paragraph on pimping, which criminalised all relationships with women who sold sex. Provocatively, they argued that the state was the biggest pimp of all, for it allowed prostitution but put in place rules and regulations which forced women to break them.[1166]

Activists insisted that *Sperrbezirk* regulations be revoked, with no replacement, and that all charges of selling sex in the *Sperrbezirk* be declared void.[1167] In 1983, a joint resolution of Hamburg prostitutes and women from Wages for Housework demanded an end to Hamburg's *Sperrbezirke*. They looked to petition the Hamburg senate, pointing out that fines helped no one stop selling sex, whilst the money went to the state. For the signatories, *Sperrbezirke* encouraged pimping by making all women suspect and thus vulnerable to police intervention.[1168]

A number of demands and strategies by women engaged in the West German Whores' Movement echo those of prostitute activists from outside of Germany. These

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[1165] Ibid., 162-166, 207.
[1166] Ibid., 146-150.
[1167] Ibid., 150.
[1168] 'Alle unter Kontrolle', 09.06.1983, 136-1-4617, StHH; 'Aufstand im Hamburger Sperrbezirk', *Hydra Nachtexpress*, Spring 1983, 35.

similarities are no coincidence, for international and transnational links were influential on the Whores' Movement from its beginnings, as German groups participated in the International Whores' Conventions and the foundation of the ICPR—International Committee for the Rights of Prostitutes—in 1985, with Hydra as regional coordinator.[1169] At the Whores' Conventions, participants detailed the situation of commercial sex in their respective countries, and their demands for change.[1170] In 1985, representatives from across Europe, Canada and the USA attended the first convention, as well as 'non-prostitutes' representing Thailand, Singapore, Vietnam and Yugoslavia. Although Hydra reps did not attend, they published a nine-page report written by Cora, from Frankfurt's HWG, on the convention. In it, Cora described relayed the country reports and some problems that emerged, including the exclusion of the English Collective of Prostitutes representatives for refusing to reveal whether they were prostitutes.[1171] Her report therefore conveyed the experience of attendance, central insights, and obstacles to a wider readership.

Cora also, however, detailed the difficulties that the West German Whores' Movement had in relation to the wider feminist movement. In their organisation, the Whores' Movement was undoubtedly influenced by the new social movements of the 1960s and 1970s—for instance in the use of 'self-help' groups as a form of political cooperation.[1172] More directly, members of the Whores' Movement saw themselves as acting within the feminist movement more broadly, influenced by demands for rights to bodily self-determination and campaigning on women's labour. Local groups directly co-operated with branches of the feminist movement, in particular with German Wages for Housework, which expressly declared their solidarity with prostitutes.[1173] Yet, as Cora's contribution to the *Nachtexpress* illustrates, links with the feminist movement were complicated. It told readers:

> large sections of the women;s movement have still not understood that banning the "unsavoury" excesses of patriarchy does not end the oppression of women. When will they finally understand that we are merely being paid for something that armies of secretaries, waitresses, domestic workers etc. and also wives do for free?[1174]

[1169] Heying, *Huren in Bewegung*, 106–7.
[1170] Ibid., 107.
[1171] 'Der Hurenkongress zu Amsterdam', *Hydra Nachtexpress*, Spring/Summer 1985, 28–36.
[1172] Gisela Bock, *Frauen in der europäischen Geschichte: vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich, 2000), 317–20.
[1173] Heying, *Huren in Bewegung*, 42–49.
[1174] 'Der Hurenkongress zu Amsterdam', 31.

Some prominent voices —including Alice Schwarzer and *EMMA* magazine—strongly criticised the Whores' Movement.[1175] Yet the fraught relationship of the women's movement with prostitution was not singular to West Germany.[1176] Historians have documented the longer history of women's involvement in the campaigns for abolitionism and moral reform. Divisions regarding the nature of prostitution/sex work continue to plague contemporary feminist movements.[1177]

The 1988 Whores' Ball

On 6 February 1988 Hydra staged Germany's first 'Whores' Ball'. Hydra members intended to use the proceeds of the event to set up a fund to support their work and offer financial help to individual prostitute women in crisis situations, such as if affected by AIDS, when facing legal cases, or when looking to retrain.[1178]

Hydra's Whores' Ball was in part modelled on the US 'Hooker's Balls' organised by group COYOTE from 1974 onwards.[1179] Although the first Hooker's Ball had been a relatively small affair, with around 300 attendees, by 1978 the ball had 12,000 in attendance, often with politicians and Hollywood stars amongst the crowd.[1180] Hydra aimed to attract such big crowds and big names from the beginning. Leading up to the ball they searched for a high-profile patroness, organised entertainment and, most importantly, sent out press releases to advertise their event. Tickets were priced at 150 marks, for press and prostitutes alike.[1181]

The ball went ahead in February with around 1,300 guests in attendance, representing a significant financial boost for the new fund. Yet in the media, reviews were mixed. Before the ball even took place, newspapers covered stories of prostitutes willing but unable to attend the ball due to the prohibitive entrance price. Some came together to found the group 'Autonomous Whores' in protest at the ball's exclusivity.[1182] After the evening itself, *taz* published an article with the headline 'Tell me, where the whores are' whilst Domenica, described as West Germany's most famous

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[1175] Alice Schwarzer, 'Macht Prostitution frei?', *Emma*, 01.10.1980.
[1176] Dagmar Herzog, *Sexuality in Europe: A Twentieth-Century History* (Cambridge, 2011), 136.
[1177] On the 'new abolitionist movement', see: Dolinsek/Hearne, 'Introduction', 127.
[1178] Biermann to Herzberg, 04.12.1987, A-Rep-400-Berlin-29A-9, FFBiZ.
[1179] Biermann to vom Hofe (Playboy), 01.12.1987, A-Rep-400-Berlin-29A-9, FFBiZ; Chateauvert, *Sex Workers Unite*, 80.
[1180] Ibid., 80–81.
[1181] *Hurenball* ticket, A-Rep-400-Berlin-29A-9, FFBiZ.
[1182] Elmar Kraushaar, 'Christliche Huren?', *taz Berlin*, 12.02.1988.

prostitute, wrote in *Bild der Frau* that there were 'no whores far and wide'.[1183] Others reported that 'celebrities avoided the ball' and a number of articles described the event as 'boring'.[1184]

The reception of a Whores' Ball as 'boring', suggests significant changes had taken place since the end of the 1970s. It illustrates the reach of the Whores' Movement; the organisation of the ball, in particular the savvy use of the media by members of Berlin's *Hydra*, highlight the new level of prostitute participation in conversations around commercial sex. By the late 1980s, conversations around commercial sex—influenced by the 'heroin wave' and AIDS crisis—had also engendered a new relationship between politics and prostitute activists. CDU health minister Rita Süssmuth had symbolically purchased the first ticket to the ball, paying 100 marks over the asking price and giving Hydra explicit permission to announce her support for the event.

Yet, although willing to support the ball financially, Süssmuth did not attend the event, citing other commitments.[1185] Berlin's health senator Ulf Fink (CDU) gave a similar excuse for his non-attendance.[1186] These reactions suggest that there remained, despite some public backing, a certain uneasiness of association with prostitutes. Süssmuth had emphasised her support for Hydra's work on AIDS and helping women exit the sex industry, thus restricting her backing to Hydra's more politically palatable elements. Even with these caveats, and without attending the ball itself, Süssmuth earned criticism from members of sister party the CSU in Bavaria, accused of 'slapping in the face' the majority of CDU/CSU voters.[1187] Hydra members had also encountered significant reluctance in their search for a 'patroness' for the Whores' Ball. Biermann described the 'somewhat devastating experience' that

> the whole world is eager to be present at an event […], but that many many people whose patronage and/or contributions we ask for have unbelievable fear of contact. Prostitution is apparently nevertheless more taboo than I think in my eternal necessary optimism. Oh well.[1188]

[1183] Domenica, 'Berliner Hurenball', *Bild der Frau*, 15.02.1988.
[1184] Kraushaar, 'Christliche Huren?'; 'Die Prominenz mied den Berliner Hurenball', *Hamburger Allgemeine*, 08.02.1988.
[1185] Süssmuth to Hydra, 07.01.1988, A-Rep-400-Berlin-29A-9, FFBiZ.
[1186] Fink to Hydra, 14.10.1987, A-Rep-400-Berlin-29A-9, FFBiZ.
[1187] 'Tandler kritisiert CDU wegen Unterstützung des "Hurenballs"', *Tagesspiegel*, 11.02.1988.
[1188] Biermann to Götz George, 21.10.1987, A-Rep-400-Berlin-29A-9, FFBiZ.

Conclusions

In some aspects, the nexus of commercial sex as a problem of public health, crime, work, or public order was strengthened over the 1980s, yet in other notable ways, the business models, systems, and premises that had dominated until now were challenged and transformed. In the field of public health, both the 'heroin wave' and the AIDS epidemic revived fears of women who sold sex as a health threat to the general population. More broadly, with increased immigration and globalisation, the frameworks within which concerns about transactional sex were expressed and understood took on a more global orientation and commercial sex was increasingly seen under the mantle of migration and 'trafficking'. In this context, across West Germany, women who sold sex founded local groups and formed the Whores' Movement to both raise awareness of and change the situation of prostitutes in Germany and beyond. Processes of city gentrification and the greater involvement of business interests meant that, while women who sold sex had become more visible participants in the public debate on commercial sex, their labour remained hidden in the cityscape.

Despite an increasingly sexualised media, which frequently referenced commercial sex, stories were usually sensationalised, transactional sex equated with scandal and disrepute. Associations with drug use, violence, coercion, illness and death were commonplace. Whilst prostitute activists were able to use scandal to raise awareness, the stigma of prostitution remained. Activists repeatedly detailed how they felt forced to live a double life, hiding their occupation from friends and family.[1189] And, borrowing the words of Gail Pheterson, 'the dishonour attributed to the prostitute has, indeed, grave legal consequences'.[1190] Women who sold sex across West Germany continued to be subjected to forced VD examinations (with few exceptions), fined or jailed for selling sex in public, excluded from state health and employment insurance schemes. They faced discrimination when renting accommodation or when working with others, their partners viewed as criminal, their motherhood skills placed under suspicion.

Much of the stigma surrounding commercial sex remains to this day. The legal position of prostitution in Germany, however, was changed with the 2001 Prostitution Act (*Prostitutionsgesetz*), which went into effect the following year. No longer defined as immoral (*sittenwidrig*), prostitution became a legitimate occupation. The Prostitution

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[1189] Heying, *Huren in Bewegung*, 49; See also: Gail Pheterson, 'The Whore Stigma: Female Dishonour and Male Unworthiness', *Social Text*, 37 (1993), 39–64.
[1190] Ibid., 43.

Act allowed brothels, which had previously often been tacitly approved in the form of 'prostitute residences'. It is no longer criminal to 'encourage prostitution' by offering good working conditions, such as clean and modern facilities. At the same time, the law limits what a brothel owner can demand from a sex worker in their employ, so that sex workers cannot legally be required to accept particular clients or perform specific practices.[1191]

The 2001 Prostitution Act is often described as the legalisation of sex work in Germany, yet selling sex was legal for many years prior to the law's passage.[1192] Moreover, a number of legal prohibitions and restrictions on commercial sex remain, including *Sperrbezirke*, maintained under threat of fines or prison time.[1193] Although Berlin has remained without a *Sperrbezirk*, this is untypical, and the city has continued to target commercial sex through intensified police controls and urban planning measures.[1194] In practice, whilst the legal recognition of prostitution as a legitimate occupation means that employers are now required to pay into Germany's insurance system, those who continue to work independently have to provide health and unemployment insurance as well as pensions themselves.[1195] The law has changed little regarding the high rent costs for women in large-scale brothels.[1196] Indeed, sociologist Barbara Kavemann and jurist Heike Rabe found a lack of political will for change after the passage of the Prostitution Act. They identify significant local variation, particularly in the systems of taxation.[1197] Looking back over the latter half of the twentieth-century has made clear that local-level variations and restrictions in the management of commercial sex is not a new development.

Since 2001, a further federal law has implemented a number of new restrictions to regulate commercial sex. The 2017 Prostitute Protection Law (*ProstituiertenSchutzgesetz*) was passed ostensibly to counter the threat of sex trafficking, in the context of increased migrant sexual labour. As well as making condom use mandatory and instituting criminal background checks against those who want to open commercial sex enterprises, the law officially reinstituted the regulation of

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[1191] Staiger, *Legalized Prostitution*, 14.
[1192] Ibid., 3.
[1193] Barbara Kavemann and Heike Rabe, eds., *Das Prostitutionsgesetz: Aktuelle Forschungsergebnisse, Umsetzung und Weiterentwicklung* (Opladen, 2009), 9.
[1194] Künkel identifies Berlin and Rostock as the only two German cities without one; Künkel, *Sex, Drugs & Control*, 109, 267.
[1195] Staiger, *Legalized Prostitution*, 15.
[1196] Ibid., 248.
[1197] Kavemann/Rabe, *Das Prostitutionsgesetz*, 9.

prostitution. Sex workers are now required to register with city officials with their full name, undergo mandatory counselling with social workers and attend regular health checks.[1198]

Despite changes at the federal level, Germany's approach to managing commercial sex remains muddled. The legal categorisation of prostitution as a legitimate occupation has not been accompanied by a reversal of zoning ordinances or restricted areas. Soliciting in a red-light district can see those who sell sex be subject to fines or even jail time. Sex workers, unlike other occupations, are required to undergo a range of regulations, whilst many remain outside of the protections of Germany's welfare state. Although the presence of commercial sex is often evident through advertisements in the cityscape, those who sell sex are pushed from the city streets.

[1198] Staiger, *Legalized Prostitution*, 19.

Conclusion

This thesis has shown how the restrictions and permittances of federal law give us only a slim indication of the multifarious experiences of women who sold sex in West Germany in the second half of the twentieth century. It has argued, and demonstrated, how local-level variations and contradictions in the management of commercial sex make it essential to shift the gaze from national law and policy. Differing priorities set by local governments and city administrators shaped the geographies and economies of commercial sex.[1199] Local health and police departments selectively interpreted their responsibilities and powers regarding commercial sex in the city, and this played a central role in determining institutional involvement in the private and working lives of women who sold sex. Yet it is also clear that an assortment of non-state actors, be they businesspeople or protesting residents, shaped both the measures in place and their enactment. Crucially, women who sold sex, as they moved around the city, alternated working forms and locations, or avoided police or health registration, tested the limits of interventions on a daily basis.

Women who sold sex in West Germany did not all passively accept the measures put in place to control commercial sex, nor did they all passionately resist. Although the thesis has included moments when women who sold sex grouped together to protest for change, as in 1968 when women in Hamburg sent an open letter to the local health senator, I do not take the infrequency of such interventions as evidence that women who sold sex did not meaningfully shape their working and private lives. Rather than searching for extremes of compliance and resistance, I have highlighted the myriad of negotiations which shaped and managed commercial sex from day to day.

Throughout this process, the range of factors which determined their experiences and vulnerabilities when engaging with sexual labour have repeatedly become clear. These included women's background, social class, nationality, 'race', and family status. Histories of the care system, caring roles towards children or family members, as well as romantic or abusive relationships all played a part. In these circumstances and with these contingencies, women who sold sex, through their actions and reactions, shaped the form that measures took on the ground.

The examination of three cities has resolutely shown the importance of the *local* in the management of commercial sex in the Federal Republic. To a great degree,

[1199] In this, the work also substantiates Dolinsek's argument of the 1950s re-scaling of prostitution as a local problem: Dolinsek, 'Kein Mädchenhandel mehr', 405.

prostitution was absent from the national and state political agenda during the 1960s and 1970s, and local responses usually meant that influential decisions were taken away from the public eye. The system of health office registration, a significant intervention in the lives of women who sold sex, was in many ways largely determined bureaucratically. Indeed, local difference has also determined the uneven archival holdings that remain. By including these within the comparison, I see the archival record both as evidence of diverging priorities in the management of commercial sex and as a crucial reminder of the limits they place on the stories we can tell.

Through the comparison, I have been able to trace how these localities differed. Hamburg's traditional association with vice, expressed through the advertisement of St. Pauli as a tourist area, influenced the form of the city's *Sperrbezirk*, as city administrators chose to make allowances for the idiosyncrasies of this famous vice district. In this, the work has furthered existing studies which have explored the marketing of St. Pauli as a tourist district, by drawing out the crucial impact of this marketing on regulations to manage commercial sex and their implementation, as well as their renegotiation over time.[1200] In West Berlin, commercial sex and the measures taken to control it were clearly impacted by the city's division, in the earlier years by East German border-crossing women, and later by the wall itself. In a city walled-in from all sides, administrators had no outskirts into which to displace commercial sex should they install a restricted area of their own. Berlin's sex industry, by consequence, remains less spatially concentrated to this day.[1201]

My exploration of commercial sex in this period has also challenged dominant narratives of the three cities. Hamburg's liberal or lenient reputation, for instance, or Cologne's as Catholic stronghold, look far less straightforward once the treatment of women who sold sex is taken into consideration. My in-depth approach has shown, for instance, that even when court decisions fell in favour of women charged with solicitation, Hamburg's vice police responded with intensified policing and record-keeping.

Despite their differences, however, the three cities displayed some interesting commonalities. Firstly, West Berlin, Cologne and Hamburg all contended with police forces less willing to aid health offices directly in the implementation of the GBG and each evidenced the struggles of police departments with court decisions that did not fall in their favour. These diverging judgements illustrate the impact of competing interests

[1200] Such as: Sneeringer, *A Social History*; Künkel, *Sex, Drugs & Control*.
[1201] See: Künkel, *Sex, Drugs & Control*.

in the management of commercial sex, particularly when legal liberalisations—such as the rights enshrined in Basic Law—challenged attempts to utilise traditional methods in the 'fight against prostitution'. Secondly, the three case studies also each show how, prior to larger numbers of migrant women selling sex in West Germany, concerns about commercial sex often intersected with fears about foreign 'guest workers', similarly understood as threat both to public health and public order. Furthermore, whilst the move away from the street as common site for sexual labour was less evident in West Berlin, each of the cities saw the popularity of certain forms of commercial sex shift, most clearly in the development of call-girl work as central element of urban transactional sex. The establishment of the Eros-Centers and the new importance of 'luxury' offerings also illustrate the greater involvement of big business in commercial sex across the country.

Focussing on the local has also made it possible to draw out a wide range of actors who 'managed' commercial sex in the West German city. More than just lawmakers, politicians or even police officers, I have looked to bureaucrats and welfare workers who staffed the system, women who sold sex, their 'pimps', clients and partners, madams or managers, investors and city residents, to explore the complex stories of competing interests and interactions. The above categories were not discrete and actors traversed or straddled the groups. Rather, my exploration has looked to take apart a number of the categories themselves. Crucially, I have also extensively considered the role of business interests, thus widening the scope of who historians—and contemporary commentators—consider to be the third-party profiteers of commercial sex.

I take none of these three cities as representative in and of themselves. Hamburg, it can be argued, is the most prominent as a hub of the West German sex industry, whilst West Berlin, with its island status, is undoubtedly the most idiosyncratic. Cologne is perhaps the most typical of a big West German city, although it was also shaped by its own peculiarities, in particular its relation to the new capital, neighbouring Bonn. When viewed together, however, Hamburg, Cologne and West Berlin offer valuable conclusions that stretch beyond their city boundaries, particularly when local actors—in their attempts to manage commercial sex—directly engaged in comparison and co-operation between cities. While I have focussed on sexual labour in urban contexts, future research which incorporates rural or provincial perspectives (in particular studies from southern Germany) or one which looks to informal transactional

sex would prove a valuable avenue of exploration. The study of border towns, considering the limits of the 'West German' system of managing commercial sex, could also prove fruitful.

My study also shows that the negotiation of older, repressive measures of managing commercial sex stretched past the initial post-war years to play out over the 1960s and 1970s, casting a longer shadow than previously assumed. Namely, the legal foundation for workhouse incarcerations for women who sold sex was strengthened in the early 1960s before its abolition ten years later, resulting in a growing proportion of women convicted on prostitution offences in the West German workhouses. My temporal focus recasts the history of the workhouse and of coercive welfare interventions more generally, extending narratives which concentrate on the 1930s and 1940s, in particular the period of Nazi rule. Most notably, my studies of Hamburg, Cologne and West Berlin document the tenacious persistence of regulatory measures in West Germany, years after state-regulated prostitution had officially been abolished. Although each of the three cities saw health office surveillance slowly become less repressive—for instance through the gradual removal of forced examinations or the wide-ranging elements of coercive confinement—these developments consistently lagged far behind the relative 'danger' to the population that VD posed. Conversely, by the time HIV/AIDS had taken hold in West Germany, health offices in Hamburg and West Berlin showed a willingness to use voluntary approaches. With all three cities primarily governed by social-democrats over the course of the 1960s and 1970s, or in coalitions between the SPD and CDU, the cases illustrate that the sway held by regulation was not confined only to the more conservative CDU. The health office registration of 'hwG-persons', although not regulation in the traditional sense, exhibits significant continuities with previous periods, which have up until now been largely overlooked.

The city studies also bring to light new contexts which shaped the management of commercial sex. Against the background of the renovation and restructuring of West German cities in the wake of war, city administrators and politicians increasingly viewed the presence of prostitution as a challenge. Attempts to exclude, conceal and sanitise commercial sex, under the umbrella of public order measures, are evident in Hamburg, Cologne, and to a lesser extent West Berlin. This was pursued by the implementation of *Sperrbezirke* and Eros-Center brothels or restrictions on advertising, but was repeatedly challenged, particularly by migrant or drug-using women who sold sex. Although I have explored these developments with a particular focus on the cities

of Cologne and Hamburg, similar changes took place across the country, with *Sperrbezirke* and Eros-Centers coming to define the landscape of urban prostitution.[1202] Many of the measures and decisions taken by city administrators and police recall the words of historian Ashwini Tambe, who determined in the case of late colonial Bombay that 'the target of these proposals […] was not prostitution as much as public opinion'.[1203] The role of city residents and business interests in moulding the form and severity of measures taken is an important precursor for the gentrification processes of the late 1980s, 1990s and beyond.

By seeing and treating commercial sex as a *problem* of public health, work(-shirking), crime or public order, many interventions by administrators, police, health or welfare departments made it more difficult and more dangerous for women to sell sex. When women spent hours at the health office waiting for their weekly appointment, or were picked up on police patrols, they also missed out on potential earnings which would, in all likelihood, have to be made up elsewhere. When city administrators chose to close the former brothel streets, women were evicted without regard for whether this would result in homelessness. The continued restrictions on renting rooms to prostitutes in general, or encouraging landlords to demand an 'inconvenience surcharge', pushed many women who sold sex into exploitative living situations. If they faced violence or crime in any aspect of their lives, the criminalisation of sexual labour and the assumption that women who sold sex were enmeshed in a criminal underground meant many were unlikely to turn to the police for help. These developments largely took place away from federal law, parliamentary discussions or national media, yet were central to the lives of women who sold sex and their families. This thesis therefore exposes the importance of source and perspective choices when tracing not only the history of West German prostitution, but in understanding the wider factors at play in determining the history of West German social policy more generally.

The examination of commercial sex in the three cities has significance beyond its direct scope, for it has resolutely challenged some of the 'big narratives' of West German historiography. The focus on the margins has shown a different story of the 'economic miracle', instead illustrating the continued impact of hidden poverty on the lives of many West Germans. Individual cases have shown how women could fall through the gaps of welfare support and the limits in the job market. Although not all

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[1202] Schießl, 'Von der Duldung', 113–40; Kraus, *Stadt ohne Geschichte?*, 412; Kreuzer, *Prostitution*, 145; Heinz-Trossen, *Prostitution und Gesundheitspolitik*, 177.
[1203] Tambe, *Codes of Misconduct*, xii.

women who sold sex did so out of dire economic need, their individual stories illustrate the limited options many women continued to face. As women who challenged the expectations of welfare workers regarding what it meant to be a woman, they were also often met with a hostile welfare regime, which punished rather than supported many of the most vulnerable.

I have similarly questioned overarching narratives of liberalisation in West German society. New 'rights' afforded to citizens of the FRG were often not extended to women who sold sex, with many of the laws governing commercial sex including explicit restrictions of basic rights enshrined in the West German constitution.[1204] The study of commercial sex has also exemplified the pervasiveness of traditional gender roles centring on the male-breadwinner husband model, particularly evident in the local health office registration. Oftentimes, women who sold sex were treated as women who did not conform and should therefore be punished. The decidedly gendered implementation of gender-neutral law—the 1953 Law on Combatting Venereal Diseases (GBG)—was rarely challenged before the mid-1980s. The persistence of cultural constructions of the pimp, who through his relationship with a prostitute represented the reversal of the classic husband and wife relationship, illustrates the endurance of traditional gender expectations and stigmas. In the 1980s, members of the Whores' Movement argued that the strength of these gender roles actually pushed women who sold sex into 'pimp' relationships, in search of a strong partner to take care of them.

More specifically, the narrative of sexual liberalisation, identified by contemporaries and historians alike, has shown itself to be limited. Time and again, legal liberalisations, notably the reforms of the criminal code, were not extended to prostitution. Most striking here is the reform of the *Kuppelei* paragraph, in which references to unspecified sexual immorality, applicable to all citizens, were replaced with the term prostitution. Liberalisations for heterosexual sex outside of marriage did not necessarily stretch to those engaged in commercial sex. Instead, and in direct contrast, commercial sex was managed and restricted in new ways, both legally and on the ground. This is not to argue that narratives of sexual liberalisation are entirely false. It is possible to identify even with this narrowed lens a sexual liberalisation for clients of commercial sex, as evidenced by the wealth of client literature and expansion of

[1204] This poses interesting parallels with earlier periods of state-regulated prostitution where, as Roos identifies, many legal provisions 'did not extend to registered prostitutes': Roos, *Weimar through the Lens*, 15.

modernised brothel architecture.[1205] Whilst increasingly sexualised media references to commercial sex are evident, these did not correspond with liberalisations in the realm of sexual labour itself. Going forward, it remains important to acknowledge that sexual liberalisations remained restricted and were by no means applied to all sections or members of society equally. Rather, sexual liberalisation processes were in their essence uneven, tracing existing hierarchies.[1206]

By extending the history of European regulation into the later twentieth century, this exploration of commercial sex also offers an important historiographical intervention in the historical study of prostitution. Tracing the legacies of regulation, and its at times astounding tenacity, reshapes the timeline of regulation in the historiography, previously typically understood to be largely eighteenth and nineteenth century phenomena. Perhaps more significantly, the shift to a non-police-based system raises the question of how we categorise regulation itself, or assess its continued links to criminalising measures.[1207] The multitude of continuities and legacies suggest that historians of sexual labour would benefit from recalibrating their historiographies of prostitution and its attendant ideologies.

Exploring the management of commercial sex in the second half of the twentieth century has allowed me to build on the historiography of prostitution in the context of post-war labour regimes, city-planning concerns and increased globalisation. Resoundingly, it has shown that many of the research foci and findings of historical studies of earlier periods continue to ring true, in particular the unhelpfulness of agent/victim binaries, or the location of commercial sex in wider moral panics. As one of the few studies to explore commercial sex in the post-war 'West' through a historical lens, this thesis shows how important it is to consider this period. Further studies focussed on the period after 1960 would certainly enhance the wider historiography on prostitution. For the West German context, work that explores men who sold sex—beyond the scope of this thesis—in the same period would be particularly valuable.

My findings provide a valuable perspective for contemporary discussions of sex work, particularly those concerned with the prevalence of sex work in countries with a welfare state apparatus. For Germany, I have shown that the legalisation of commercial

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[1205] On tourist guides: Sneeringer, 'Assembly Line of Joys', 72.

[1206] This echoes Brüning's findings on East Germany, where women who sold sex were left out of new sexual freedoms: Brüning, *Prostitution in der DDR*, 61.

[1207] This is reminiscent of Hemphill's call to broaden the view of what we consider to be regulation: Hemphill, *Bawdy City*, 17.

sex has a far longer history than the 2001 law change which defined prostitution as a legitimate occupation. I resituated developments such as the large-scale brothels or upscale sex-saunas, often linked to the 2001 Prostitution Act, in the context of the 1960s and 1970s. A longer-range comparison could raise new questions regarding the precise effect of this legal change on such establishments.

The local-level lens illustrates the myriad ways selling sex was criminalised or restricted, even whilst not being outlawed in federal law. This has consequences that go beyond the period researched, challenging the very idea of 'legalised' sex work itself. Consistently, the work highlights the need for an 'on the ground' approach which moves past the text of the law. With Germany's policies on sex work often used as representative of a liberal or legalised system, this thesis offers a necessary contextualisation and qualification of many of the assumptions that underpin current debates. It draws out precisely how women who sold sex have been subjected to restrictions and criminalisation despite the sale of sex remaining legal in principle, questioning categorisations of legalisation or regulation themselves. By highlighting the immense impact of local-level regulations and policing practices it speaks to the limits of legalisation more generally.

West Germany's history of managing commercial sex after the Second World War is full of exceptions, competing interests and local-level variations. The many paradoxes and contradictions which determined the lives of women who sold sex—the brothels that were not brothels, regulation that was not regulationism—were not anomalies but rather central underpinnings. Whilst contemporaries spoke of economic miracle or sexual revolution transforming society, women continued to sell sex in the grey zone of legalisation, regulation and criminalisation.

Appendices

Table T.1. Yearly average of registered prostitutes at Hamburg's *Zentrale Beratungsstelle für Prostituierte*, from 1947 to 1972.

Source: Jürgen Kahmann and Hubert Lanzerath, *Weibliche Prostitution in Hamburg* (Heidelberg, 1981), 123.

Year	In 'prostitute residences'	'free-living'/*freiwohnend*	Total
1947	420	247	667
1948	414	351	765
1949	389	561	950
1950	384	639	1,023
1951	381	647	1,028
1952	393	634	1,027
1953	405	704	1,109
1954	393	785	1,178
1955	413	840	1,253
1956	402	883	1,285
1957	417	948	1,365
1958	390	979	1,369
1959	337	987	1,324
1960	256	1,025	1,281
1961	223	1,101	1,324
1962	219	1,050	1,269
1963	219	997	1,216
1964	217	1,058	1,275
1965	200	1,067	1,267
1966	211	1,187	1,398
1967	199	1,469	1,668
1968	195	1,900	2,095
1969	194	1,997	2,191
1970	197	1,918	2,115
1971	222	1,955	2,177
1972	252	2,019	2,279

Figure A.1. Two photographs of Herbertstraße *Koberfenster*, featured in volume three of the Hamburg vice police chronicles.

The first photograph shows the *Koberfenster* from the outside, and is dated 1967. The women sitting behind the window has pushed the net curtains aside. The second photograph shows Herbertstraße 16 in 1967. Three women sit inside, in front of the *Koberfenster*, with the curtains drawn.

Source: Chronik der 'Sitte', 1963-1967 (Vol. 3), 331-1II-2680, *Staatsarchiv Hamburg* (StHH).

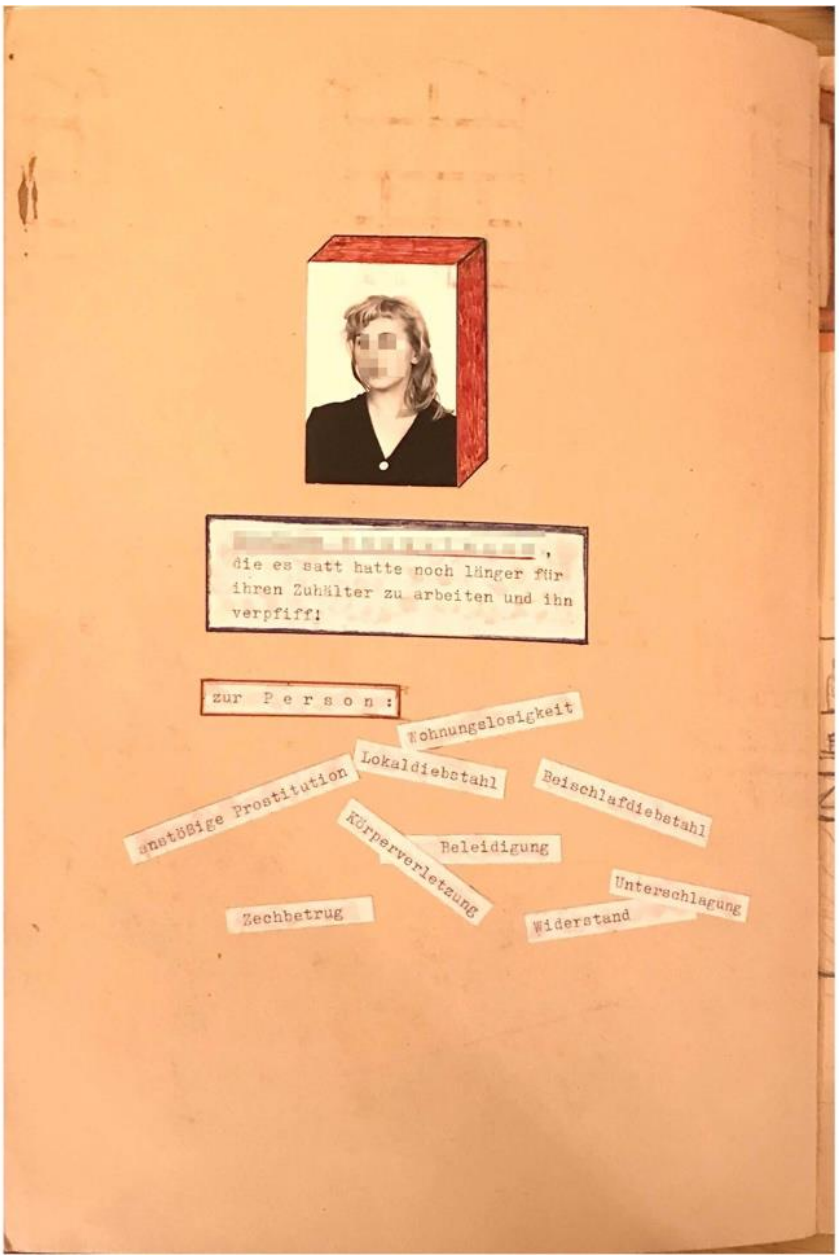
Figure A.2. These four images are taken from a thin booklet detailing the attack against Angelika W.*. The first page includes her mugshot, which also featured in the Berlin vice police ‘prostitute index’, and is subtitled ‘Angelika W[...], who was sick of working for her pimp and ratted him out.’ Underneath a selection of her past crimes—including theft, fraud and offensive prostitution—have been glued on to the page.

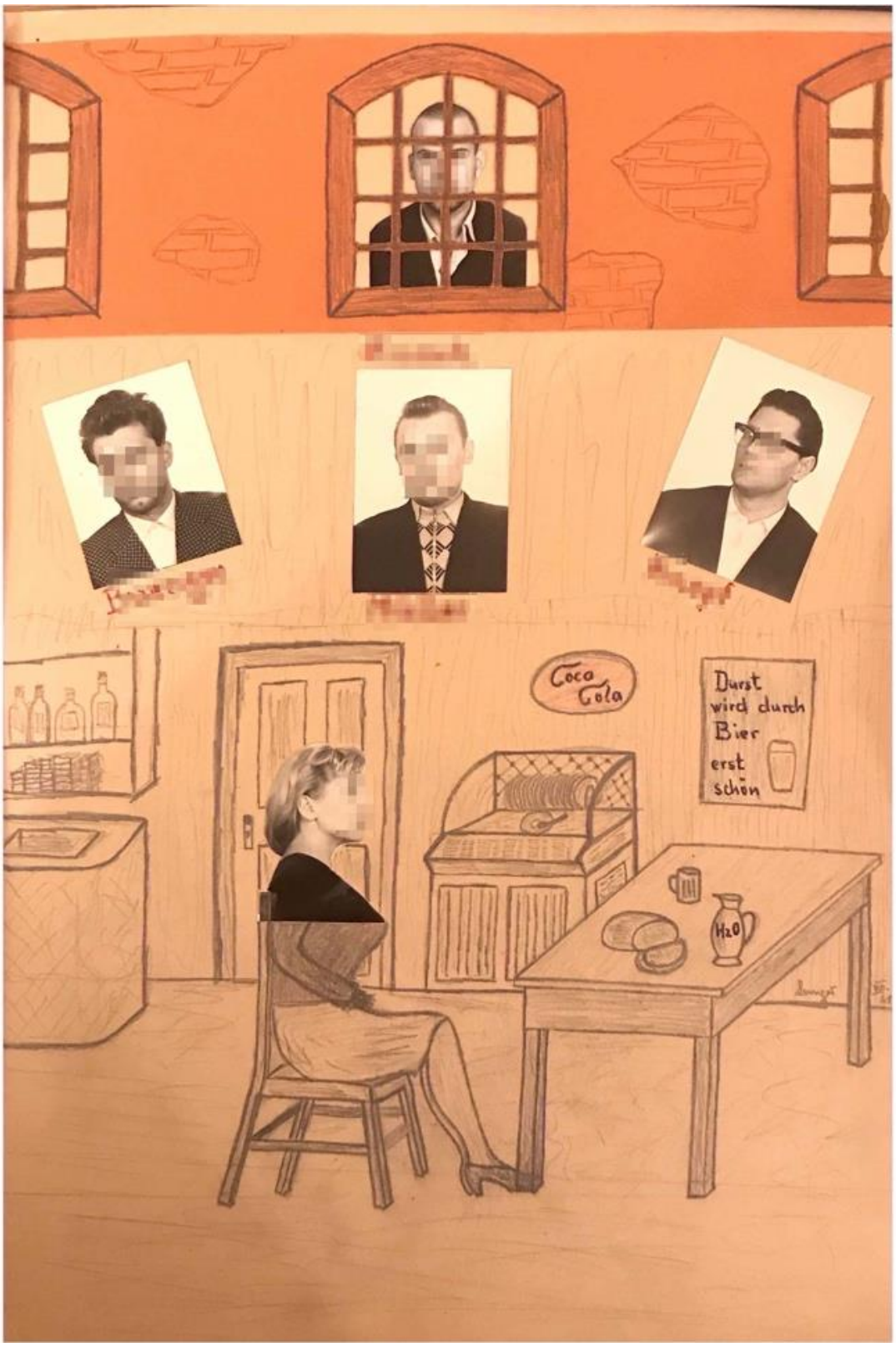
On the second page, mugshots of her, her attackers, and her pimp, Johann R.*, have been incorporated in a pencil drawing of the scene of the attack.

The third page is captioned ‘“Snitches” – have to eat dry bread!’. A description of the attack is glued in below.

The fourth page includes a photograph of Angelika and Johann with a third person. The photograph is captioned ‘A picture of “happy” days’.

Source: Uncategorised files from the *Polizeihistorische Sammlung* (PHS) Berlin.




Coca Cola
Durst wird durch Bier erst schön
H2O

Wer „pfeift" –

muss trocken Brot essen!

Am [illegible]2.1955 wurde die Prostituierte [illegible]

in einem Lokal in Berlin W 30, Augsburgerstr., von einer Clique von Zuhältern unter Schlägen gezwungen, 8 Scheiben trockenes Brot in kürzester Zeit zu verzehren.

Es handelte sich hier um eine Vergeltungsmaßnahme gegen die genannte Person durch einen bestimmten Personenkreis.

Die [illegible] wurde von einem Zuhälter finanziell so ausgenommen, daß sie diesen zur Anzeige brachte. Der betreffende Zuhälter wurde festgenommen, er erhielt Haftbefehl.

An einer derartigen Vergeltungsmaßnahme konnten nur Personen interessiert sein, die das Gleiche zu befürchten hatten.

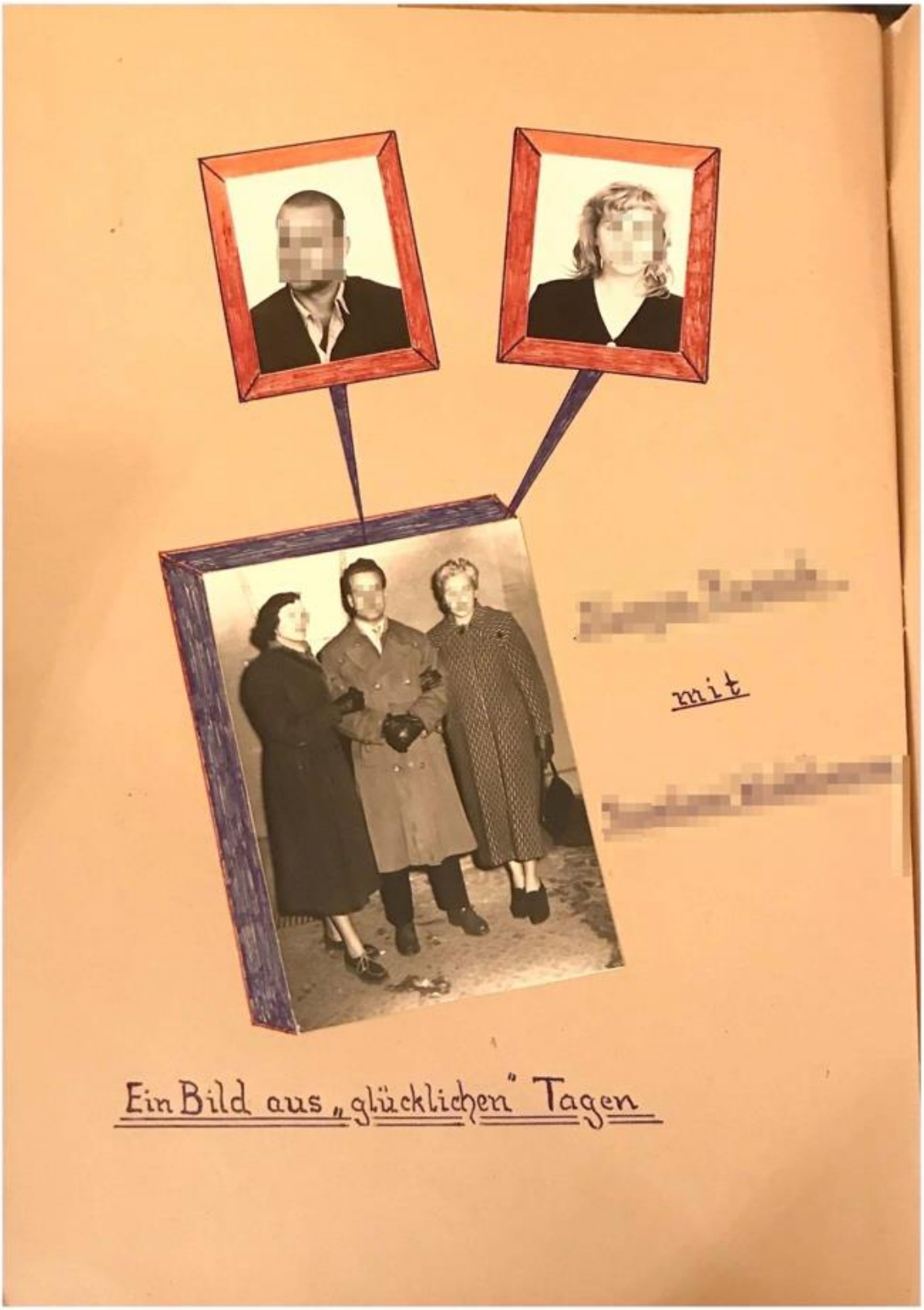

mit
Ein Bild aus „glücklichen" Tagen

Figure A.3. A photograph of the St. Pauli pimps football team, referred to by Hamburg vice police officers as 'FC Bandito'. This photograph featured in volume four of the Hamburg morals police chronicle. The chroniclers captioned the image: 'All those portrayed are at home in the St. Pauli milieu. They spend their days in the notorious pubs of the Gerhardstraße, in the *Eros Center* and the *Palais 'Amour*—or every now and then in in prison.'

Source: Chronik der 'Sitte', 1967-1972 (Vol. 4), 331-1II-2681, *Staatsarchiv Hamburg* (StHH).

Figure A.4. This map featured in volume two of the Hamburg morals police chronicle and indicates the boundaries of the 1961 Hamburg *Sperrbezirk.* St. Georg is enclosed by the red outlines on the right.

Source: Chronik der 'Sitte', 1953-1963 (Vol. 2), 331-1II-2679, *Staatsarchiv Hamurg* (StHH).

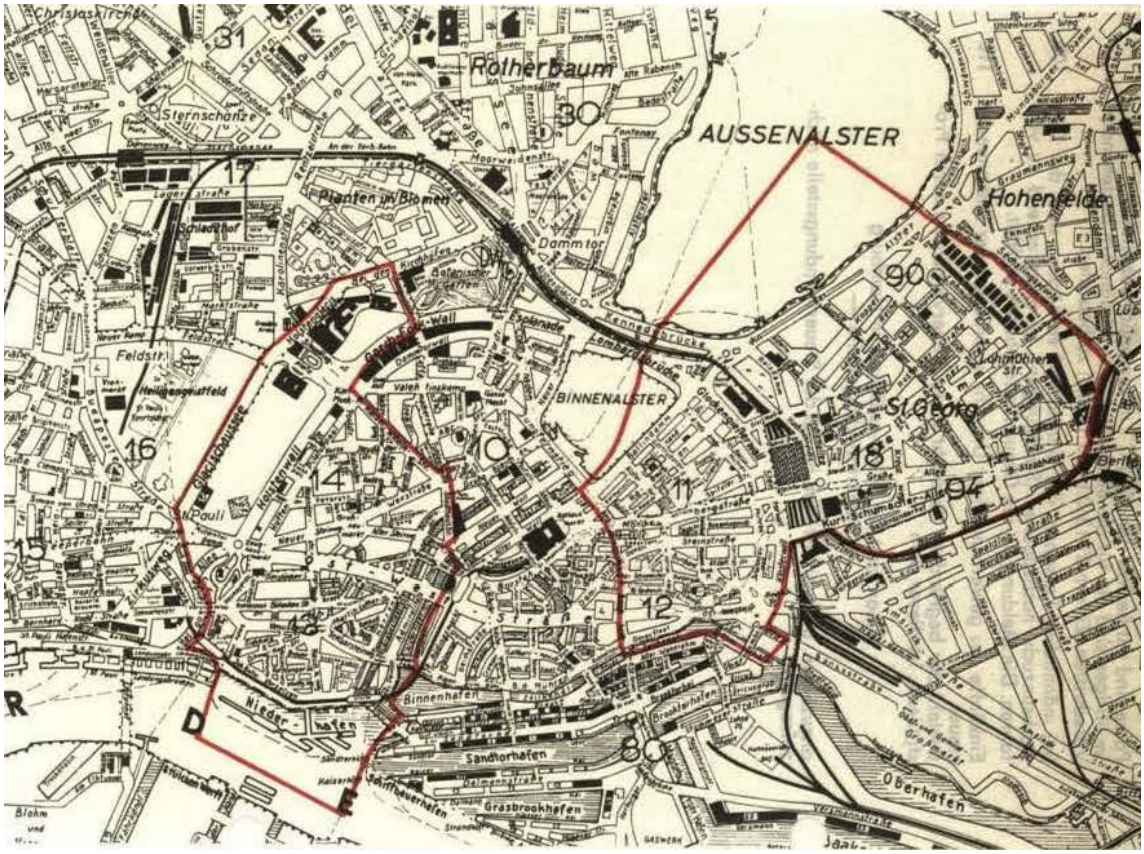


Figure A.5. An information sheet from Cologne regarding the new *Sperrbezirk*, with a map of the restricted area on the reverse. Police officers handed these to suspected prostitutes they met in the Cologne *Sperrbezirk.* They recorded the names and addresses of women who had been given an information sheet, to facilitate a successful prosecution if the women were caught again.

Source: BR-0051-563, *Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Abteilung Rheinland* (LAV NRW)

M e r k b l a t t

über die Strafbarkeit der gewerbsmäßigen Unzucht

Mit Wirkung vom 25.8.1961 ist in Kraft:

" V e r o r d n u n g

zum Schutze der Jugend und des öffentlichen Anstandes im Bereich der Stadt Köln vom 8. August 1961.

Auf Grund des Artikels 2 des Fünften Strafrechtsänderungsgesetzes vom 24. Juni 1960 (BGBl.I S.477) in Verbindung mit § 1 der Verordnung der Landesregierung des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen vom 20. September 1960 (GV.NW. S.332) wird für den Bereich der Stadt Köln verordnet:

§ 1

Zum Schutze der Jugend und des öffentlichen Anstandes ist es verboten, in dem in § 2 dieser Verordnung festgelegten Bezirk der Stadt Köln auf Straßen, Wegen, Plätzen und Brücken, in Bahnhöfen sowie an allen Orten, die öffentlich sind oder von der Öffentlichkeit eingesehen werden können, der Gewerbsunzucht nachzugehen.

§ 2

(1) Der Bezirk (Sperrbezirk) wird durch folgende Straßen, Plätze und Brücken umgrenzt:

Mülheimer Brücke, An der Schanz, Riehler Straße, Innere Kanalstraße, Universitätsstraße, Luxemburger Straße, Moselstraße, Eifelplatz, Eifelstraße, Vorgebirgswall, Bonner Wall, Bonner Straße, Brühler Straße, Militärringstraße, Oberländer Ufer, Agrippina-Ufer, Bayenstraße, Severinsbrücke, Gotenring, Justinianstraße, Deutz-Mülheimer Straße, Barmer Straße, Elberfelder Straße, Auenweg, Hafenstraße, Mülheimer Freiheit, Mülheimer Brücke.

(2) Der Bezirk (Sperrbezirk) schließt die genannten Straßen, Plätze und Brücken ein.

§ 3

Diese Verordnung tritt eine Woche nach dem Tage ihrer Verkündung im Amtsblatt der Bezirksregierung Köln in Kraft.

Köln, den 8. August 1961

Der Regierungspräsident
gez. Unterschrift "

-ABl. Köln 1961 S.333-

Zuwiderhandlungen gegen diese Verordnung werden gemäß § 361 Ziff.6c StGB mit Haft bis zu 6 Wochen bestraft.
Daneben kann auf E i n w e i s u n g in ein A r b e i t s h a u s erkannt werden.

Unabhängig davon gelten sowohl innerhalb als auch außerhalb des Sperrbezirks die bisherigen Strafvorschriften:

a) Auffälliges Anbieten zur Unzucht (§ 361, Nr.6 StGB)
b) Unzucht in Kirchennähe und solchen Wohnungen, in welchen Kinder und Jugendliche wohnen (§ 361, Nr.6a StGB)
c) Unzucht in der Nähe von Schulen oder anderen zum Besuch von Kindern und Jugendlichen bestimmten Örtlichkeiten (§ 361, Nr.6b StGB)
d) Erregung öffentlichen Ärgernisses (§ 183 StGB)

sowie das Gesetz zum Schutze der Jugend in der Öffentlichkeit uneingeschränkt weiter.

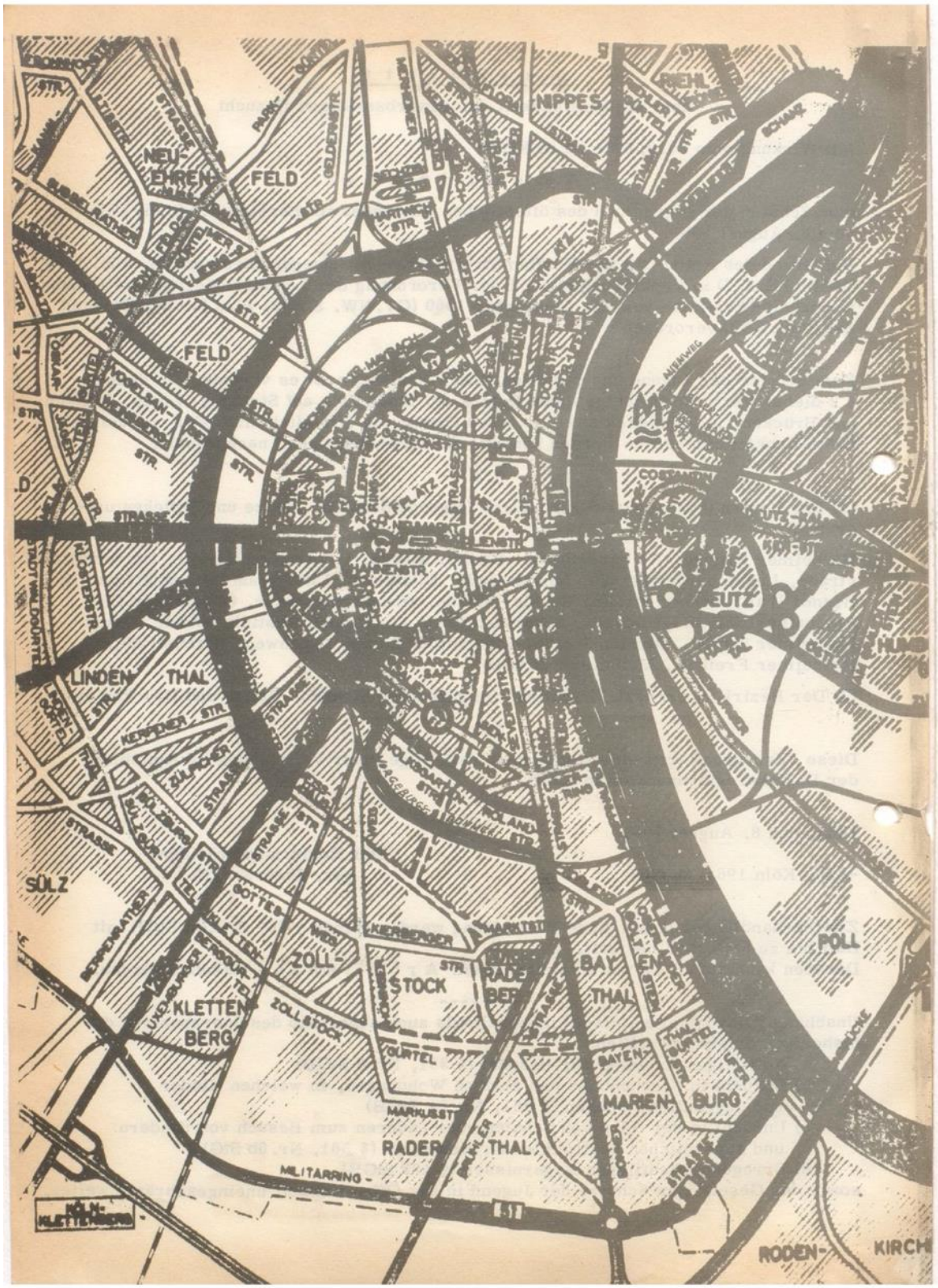

NEU-
EHREN-
FELD
NIPPES
FELD
LINDEN-
THAL
SÜLZ
ZOLL-
STOCK
KLETTEN-
BERG
BAY-
EN-
THAL
POLL
MARIEN-
BURG
RADER
THAL
MILITÄRRING
RODEN-
KIRCH

Figure A.6. This map featured in volume four of the Hamburg morals police chronicle and indicates the boundaries of the 1970 Hamburg *Sperrbezirk.* The red outline now encloses, from left to right: Altona-*Altstadt,* St. Pauli, *Neustadt,* St. Georg.

Source: Chronik der 'Sitte', 1967-1972 (Vol. 4), 331-1II-2681, *Staatsarchiv Hamburg* (StHH).

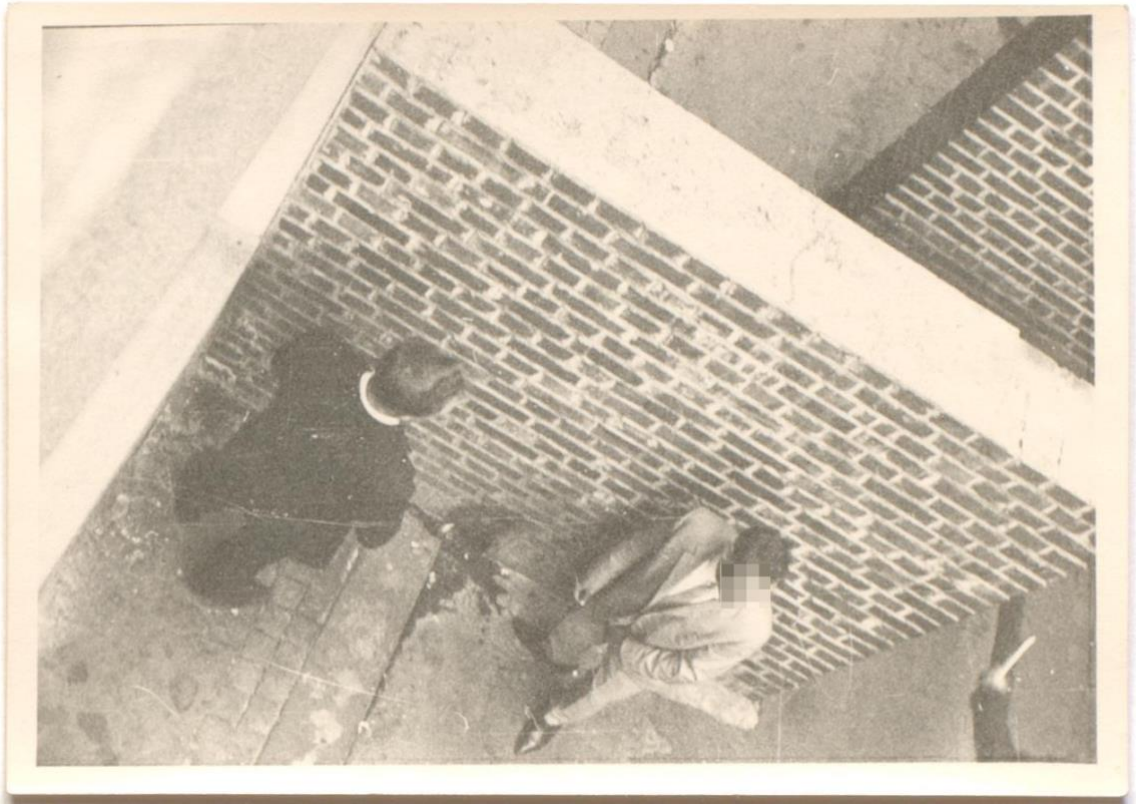
Figure A.7. These photographs were taken by inhabitants of Cologne's Ehrenstraße and sent to a range of local authorities as well as the local media to complain about the situation in Kleine Brinkgasse.

The first photograph depicts two men caught urinating on the walls concealing Kleine Brinkgasse. A second photograph captures Kleine Brinkgasse from above and shows two women leaning out of the windows of their house. The street appears busy, populated with men in suits and ties, but also by two young boys on their bicycles.

An accompanying letter documented the complaints:

'Howling engines (mopeds), squealing brakes and tires, horn concerts, very specific, weekly-returning cars. Nocturnal concerts of wandering musicians, portable radios and record players, men with accordions and harmonicas, jazz groups with full line-up, choral songs and solos of drunken boys, whose content, as well as that of the loudly recited poems and spoken rhymes, are indescribable. Shouting, calls and incitements of the visitors and spectators to each other and to the prostitutes, of the foulest and meanest kind. Roaring laughter of hundreds of men after a "successful joke". Screaming newspaper sellers, singing, shrieking, and sometimes in the morning hours, cursing themselves, God and the world. Prostitutes rolling in the alley in a drunken state. The sound of a troop of soldiers marching unevenly on the spot, caused by the incessantly moving mass of men under our windows, occasionally interrupted by the fighting tumult of sleeping drunks. In the evening hours, tin shutters are lowered by the prostitutes with a roar, which the visitors then beat against with fists, beer bottles and sticks. The number of visitors to a house can be registered by the clattering slamming of the front doors. Every morning (except on Sundays and holidays) noise by a group of (municipal?) workers who are tasked with cleaning the alley and the "Cologne Wall" (as visitors often call the wall that blocks the view of the Brinkgasse from Ehrenstraße, or the "Berlin Wall") with brooms and fire hoses (for this, however, we are grateful to them).'

Source: Ehrenstraße complaint letter, 03.09.1964, BR-0051-564, *Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Abteilung Rheinland* (LAV NRW).



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32432 Kostenabrechnungen der Landhilfsbedürftigen – "[Jugendliche] Herumtreiberinnen" (1950−1951)
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345469 Länderausschuss Gewerberecht (1961-1977)

B-106 Bundesministerium des Innern
117610 Ausländerrechtliche Maßnahmen gegen internationalen Frauenhandel und illegale Prostitution in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (1968-1988)
15770 Bekämpfung des Mädchenhandels und der Prostitution (1950-1960)
17302 Mädchenhandel, Bekämpfung der Prostitution (1954-1957)
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B-149 Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Sozialordnung
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B-189 Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend
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2.9-A-10 Korrespondenz/Streitbriefe, Unterlagen zu Hydra
2.9-A-12, 2.9-A-13 Sammlung Pieke Biermann (1973-1990)
2.9-A-21 Sammlung Pieke Biermann (1973-1991)
2.9-A-34, 20.2.15-62 Materialien zu Hydra-Aktivitäten (1977-1991)
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Acc. 361 Amt für öffentliche Ordnung
A188 Dirnenunwesen (1964)
A189 Dirnenunwesen
A190 Schließung der Nächelsgasse

Acc. 414 Jugendpflege
A69 Milieu-Berichte (1963)
A70 Milieu-Berichte (1959-1963)

Acc. 441 Gemeinde Rodenkirchen
A519 Rodenkirchen

Acc. 496 Büro des Oberstadtdirektors
A2 Schriftwechsel mit Dezernat II (1967-1975)
A3 Schriftwechsel mit Dezernat III (1965-1968)

Acc. 561 Jugendpflege (1949-1975)
A382 Kontrollen, Beschwerden, Presse zu Prostitution (1965-1966)

Acc. 607 Hauptamt
A3 Sichtungsstelle für Geschlechtskranke, Sollbestände (1946-1959)
A12 Beratungsstelle für Geschlechtskranke, Sollbestände (1943-1959)

Acc. 646 Gesundheitspflege, Gesundheitsfürsorge
A16 Geschlechtskranken-Fürsorge (1947-1956)

Acc. 672 Pädagogische und soziale Dienste (1953-1980)
A13

Acc. 734 Sozialamt
A68 Offene und geheime Prostitution, 1956-1961

Acc. 735 Jugendamt, Jugendfürsorge, Amtsvormundschaft
A58 Erziehungsfürsorge, Betreuung

Acc. 1304 Gesundheitsaufsicht
A30 Zwangsmaßnahmen gegen geschlechtskanke Frauen A-H (1960-1963), A31 Zwangsmaßnahmen gegen geschlechtskanke Frauen I-P (1960-1963)

Acc. 1647 Präventions- und Beratungsstelle für HIV/Aids
A11 Sammelakten (1985)
A12 Sammelakten (1985)
A13 Fahndungsfälle (1981-1983)

A14 Fahndungsfälle (1984-1985)

Acc. 2116

Mf156

Best. 500B

A580 Versicherungsakte (Lungengasse)

Best. 1728 SPD Fraktion

A264

Best. 7550

U517

Best. 7704

A168

X-Best. Ordnungswesen

A18 Dirnenhäuser (1964-1968)

Kreisarchiv Bergisch Gladbach

Best. 146

A29

Landesarchiv Berlin (LAB)

B Rep. 001 Der Präsident des Abgeordnetenhauses von Berlin

3123

B Rep. 002 Der Regierende Bürgermeister von Berlin – Senatskanzlei

2550 Senatsvorlage 3524

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41326-41327

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535(1962-1963)

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540 (1947-1962)

539 (1963-1964)

726 Statistik zum GBG (1953-1968)

3795 Auslegung und Durchführung des Polizeiverwaltungsgesetzes

4373 (1969-1970)

B Rep. 005 Senatsverwaltung für Justiz

508 Zuhälterei

857 Zuhälterei/Menschenhandel (1982-1986)

B Rep. 008 Senatsverwaltung für Arbeit und Sozialwesen

1278 Datenschutz im Bereich Gesundheit - Einzelangelegenheiten

B Rep. 010 Senatsverwaltung für Wirtschaft

2300 Bekämpfung des Rowdytums (1959-1962)

2301 Bekämpfung des Rowdytums (1959-1963)

B Rep. 012 Senatsverwaltung für Gesundheit

66 Monatsberichte des Senators für Gesundheit, (1953-1955)

B Rep. 013 Senatsverwaltung für Jugend und Familie

502 Verstöße gegen das “Gesetz zum Schutze der Jugend in der Öffentlichkeit” (1965-1967)
586 Überwachung und Bekämpfung der Prostitution
693 Berichte und Informationen zum Jugendschutz

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7807 Gewerbebetriebe nach §33aGewO (1954-1969)
7850 Bestimmungen der Berliner Vollstreckungsbehörden
8332 Gewerbedelikte (1980, 1982)
8335 Gewerbedelikte (1976, 1982-1983)
8334 Gewerbedelikte (1980, 1982-83)
8351 Gewerbedelikte (1981, 1983-1986)
8361 Gewerbedelikte (1979, 1984-1986)
8362 Gewerbedelikte (1979, 1984-1985)
8369 Gewerbedelikte (1981, 1984-85)
8385 Gewerbedelikte (1977, 1984-1987)
8389 Gewerbedelikte (1978, 1985-1986)
8404 Gewerbedelikte (1981, 1986)
8407 Gewerbedelikte (1984, 1986-1988)
8408 Gewerbedelikte (1981, 1985-87)
8414 Gewerbedelikte (1985, 1986-1988)
8417 Gewerbedelikte (1985, 1986-1987)
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8448 Gewerbedelikte (1981-1983)

B Rep. 020-01 Der Polizeipräsident in Berlin. Abteilung Kriminalpolizei

247 Retentakte Mord (1955-56)

B Rep. 039 Landgericht Berlin Zivilkammern

286-290 Bügerlicher Rechtstreit

B Rep. 60 Jugendarrestanstalt Berlin

58 Behandlung der Gefangenen (1985-1987)

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109 gem. Erpressung von Prostituierten (1973-1974)
306 Kuppelei
368 Kuppelei
510 Kuppelei
543 verschuldeter Obdachlosigkeit und Gewerbsunzucht

B Rep. 065-02 Jugendvollzugsanstalt Charlottenburg für Frauen

20 GU im Sperrgebiet (1962)
50 Kuppelei
166 Kuppelei

B Rep. 085 Verkehrsamt Berlin

23. Hotelbeurteilungen A-Z (1970-1980)
78 Vergnügungsbetriebe (1975-1976)
133 Beschwerden über Nachtlokale wegen überhöhter Preise (1966-1975)

B Rep. 213 Bezirksverwaltung Zehlendorf

1912/2

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5891 Personalakte Karl Kiehne

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12396, 12705 Geschlechtskrankheiten (1953-57), 12723, 12730, 12794, 12820, 12850, 13618, 13535, 13547, 13548, 13569, 13624, 13626, 13688

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559 (2 vols.) Dirnenschwerpunkt Horwarth-/Werder-/Spicher-/Goebenstr.
560 Überwachung und Bekämpfung der Prostitution
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110 Beschwerden wegen angeblicher Prostitution (1970-1979), 143 Beschwerden wegen Sittendelikten (1973-1987)

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7 Besprechungen des Polizeibeirats Köln (1966), 25 Besprechungen zwischen dem Oberstadtdirektor Köln und dem Polizeipräsidenten Köln (1957-1964)

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NW 0020 Kultusministerium

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179 Aufenthaltserlaubnisse für ausländische Prostituierte (1966-1984)

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2612 Durchführung von ausländerrechtlichen Maßnahmen zur Bekämpfung von ausländischen Prostituierten und Zuhältern (1968-1982)
2613 Maßnahmen gegen Homosexualität (1970-1980)
4610 Verordnungen und polizeirechtliche Bestimmungen zur Bekämpfung der Prostitution (1960-1980)
4611Verordnungen und polizeirechtliche Bestimmungen zur Bekämpfung der Prostitution (1981-1986)
4614-4616 Bekämpfung der Prostitution - Allgemeines (1954-1990)
4617-4618 Bekämpfung der Prostitution in St Georg (1959-1986)

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120

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351-18

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1215 Entwürfe zu einem geplanten Arbeitserziehungsgesetz für Prostituierte (1947-19579)
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4684 Einrichtung und Unterhaltung von Bordellen (1947-1955)
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